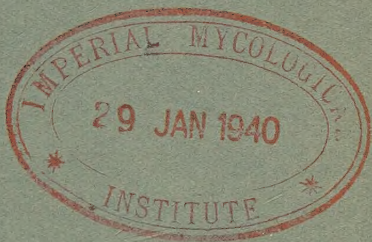


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No. 9

GOVERNMENT OF NORTHERN IRELAND
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

MONTHLY REPORT

JANUARY, 1940.



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GOVERNMENT OF NORTHERN IRELAND
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

MONTHLY REPORT

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MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

MONTHLY REPORT

JANUARY, 1940.

Most of the readers of this Report will have received the Minister's New Year letter, in which he gave valuable advice and guidance to one and all in order that each farmer in Northern Ireland would be in a position to deal with the rapidly changing circumstances during the coming year. As, however, some of the points brought out in that personal letter are of such vital importance in these difficult times, they are again brought to the notice of the farming community.

First and foremost is the need for realisation of the fact that approximately £80 out of every £100 of our agricultural income is obtained by the sale off farms in Northern Ireland of stock and stock products such as cattle, pigs, sheep, eggs, butter, etc. The remainder of the income comes from the sale of crops, and the greater part of this small remainder is accounted for by the sale of flax and potatoes.

Secondly in importance is that farmers cannot expect to be supplied during the course of the war, and probably for some time afterwards, with anything like the quantity of imported feeding stuffs that was used in pre-war days.

In consequence of these facts it is reiterated that unless a very much larger proportion of the feeding stuffs required for our livestock is grown at home it will be impossible to maintain the livestock population at anything like the normal level, and the volume of trade will decline with serious results for farmers and the country generally.

The chief cereal crop grown in Northern Ireland is oats, which, unlike wheat, is not used to any appreciable extent for human consumption. Accordingly, the production of oats and of barley—both animal feeds—should be undertaken on a much larger scale as soon as possible in order that our livestock may be fed to produce as much milk, pigs, eggs, beef and mutton as is possible.

It is pointed out that it is essential that a supreme effort should be made to sow at least 50,000 acres of barley this spring in order to take the place of imported maize in the feeding ration for pigs. For this purpose also those farmers who have not succeeded in getting winter wheat in after potatoes should not hesitate to grow barley. The bulk of the newly-ploughed land will doubtless be sown to oats, and in this connection it is requested that farmers should bear in mind the desirability of growing green foods, such as marrow-stem kale and cabbage for feeding to dairy cows, cattle and even pigs. Dairy farmers are particularly requested to grow these crops, as well as roots.

Another point dealing with the cultivation of the greater part of the newly-ploughed land is that owing to the difficulties in obtaining regular supplies of feeding stuffs many farmers have been feeding home-grown oats to their cattle and other stock. The quantity of oats available for seed purposes may, accordingly, be reduced considerably in some districts. It is, therefore, strongly urged that farmers should take the necessary steps without further delay to provide themselves with their requirements of seed corn for sowing this spring. Here again, in these abnormal times, farmers should not count on obtaining imported supplies of seed this spring as easily as in peace time, and should take note that they must rely to a greater extent than usual upon their own seed for spring sowing. Farmers intending to grow barley for the first time will require to purchase seed, and it is particularly requested that early arrangements be made to obtain supplies. Field beans are also a very useful crop to grow, as beans are the only home-grown food which is rich in protein. Notes on the growing of beans are given on page 552.

Finally, farmers may rest assured that they may undertake crop production on the very largest scale possible in the sure knowledge that the prices for the crops harvested will be remunerative and that they will be rendering a most useful service to the nation.

AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS.

AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS AT 1st JANUARY, 1940.

Unsettled weather with heavy rains during the first two weeks of December caused heavy land to become waterlogged and unworkable, and flooding occurred in some low-lying fields. A welcome improvement took place at the middle of the month, and the cool, dry conditions which followed speedily brought the land into a workable state and enabled farmers to make further progress with the greatly increased tillage work on hands. Although there were a few fairly severe frosts in the latter half of the month temperatures, generally, remained comparatively high for the time of year, and pastures and, consequently, livestock benefited.

Further sowings of winter wheat were made in the latter part of last month, and there was increased activity in all districts with the ploughing-up of land, principally old lea for the grant. With the increased number of tractors available, and favourable weather and soil conditions prevailing in the latter half of December, farmers made further considerable headway with this work. Some farmers, however, delayed further the ploughing of grass-land in order that their cattle would derive full benefit from the grazing, which remained exceptionally good for the time of year. Most of the stubble land intended for potatoes and turnips has now been ploughed, and the amount of this work completed is about the same as in a normal season.

As already indicated, there is still a good deal of nourishing "keep" for cattle, although some of the pastures are now looking rather bare as a result of intensive grazing and the recent night frosts. With farmers busy on tillage work and phosphatic manures, particularly basic slag and Gafsa rock phosphate, rather difficult to obtain, artificials have not been applied to pastures to any appreciable extent, but a good deal of use has been made of farmyard manure in some areas.

The good grazing still available on many farms was a particularly favourable feature of the month as the supplies of purchased feeding stuffs remained very limited in all districts and, although home-grown fodder is fairly plentiful, farmers are endeavouring to conserve their supplies with a view to making them last out until the spring grass is available. Rather large quantities of oats are now being fed, however, the farmers are again strongly advised to exercise as much care as possible in the use of the grain, so that they will have sufficient supplies available at seed-time. As a rule the quantities of oats on hands should ensure that there will be sufficient

supplies of seed in all but a few areas if farmers always keep this aspect in mind. The position with regard to barley is, however, different, as this crop was not very widely grown in 1939, and it is probable that many farmers will have difficulty in obtaining enough seed for their increased requirements. They should, accordingly, carry out the advice already given by the Ministry to make early arrangements with their regular dealers for supplies. Seed potatoes should be readily obtainable in adequate quantities, but here again economy should be exercised. Difficulties regarding seed supplies will be greatest in districts which were predominantly under grass prior to the war, and are going over to tillage farming as a result of the national necessity for increased food production, but the Ministry is taking the necessary steps to cope with the situation envisaged.

With regard to supplies of fertilisers, as has already been mentioned, phosphatic manures are rather difficult to obtain and, while the situation varies a good deal, the same is generally true of other fertilisers. Where supplies are available farmers are placing orders and taking delivery earlier than usual in order to make sure that there will be sufficient quantities for application in the spring. Incidentally merchants obtained substantially larger supplies of manures in December than in the same month last year.

All classes of cattle and sheep remained in good health and in fair condition during December. The exceptionally plentiful grazing in many fields helped outliers in maintaining condition, and dairy cattle also benefited so that the milk yields were not abnormally depressed by the shortage of imported concentrated foods. Breeding stocks of cattle and sheep were generally well maintained, but the numbers of brood sows were being reduced.

Trade in livestock was, on the whole, steady to firm last month. Beef prices hardened considerably and, while store cattle were in quiet request, previous rates were generally maintained, as also were those for dairy cattle, although an easier tendency prevailed at the close of the month. Young pigs and brood sows were, however, in poor demand and considerably cheaper.

THE CROPS.

WHEAT.—The wet weather in the early part of December held up the work of sowing winter wheat, but some further sowings were made during the favourable conditions prevailing towards the close of the month. Reports from all districts indicate that there are very considerably increased areas under this crop and, with early-sown fields showing strong, healthy brairds, the position to date is very encouraging.

Threshing progressed fairly steadily during last month, and only a comparatively small proportion of last year's crop remains to be threshed.

Accounts of the yields and the quality of the grain continued to be very satisfactory. Most of the farmers who grew wheat last year are either crushing the grain for use in feeding to their own livestock or conserving it for use later and, consequently, few sales have been recorded, but prices of from 12/- to 13/- per cwt. were quoted.

OATS.—The oat crop is generally in a good condition in storage. Threshing operations are now in full swing and, whilst the progress of this work varies considerably from district to district it is generally considered that more than half the crop has been threshed. The results have been satisfactory, average yields of good quality grain having been obtained in most areas.

Crushed oats are being used extensively to replace imported feeding meals in rations for livestock and, although there are still fairly good supplies of oats available on most farms, it is again stressed that the greatest care must be exercised to ensure that adequate supplies of seed oats will be available for requirements in the spring.

As might be expected, sales of oats were of small dimensions last month, and prices rose to high levels. The average price per cwt. at Northern Ireland markets was 5/9½d. above the previous month's figure at 15/2½d. A note on the control of sales of grain appears on page 546. Oat straw hardened further in price, and the average quotation of 63/3d. was 5/6d. above the November figure.

BARLEY.—This crop was well harvested, and it is keeping well in stacks and sheds. Progress with threshing operations has varied considerably throughout the country, but the yields and quality of the grain have been uniformly high.

With the increasing number of acres being ploughed up for cultivation, and the scarcity of imported feeding meals, growers are holding on to supplies of the grain for their own use, either for feeding purposes or for seed. It is again strongly advised that those farmers who intend to grow this crop in 1940, and who have not yet made arrangements for supplies of seed should do so as soon as possible with their retail dealers so as to ensure that they will have supplies in good time for sowing.

FLAX.—The scutching of the flax crop proceeded at a normal pace during December, and the work is now well advanced in most areas. As usual, the yields and quality of the fibre differed considerably from district to district, but in general the crop was fully up to average in both respects.

Sales of flax last month were made to the Control at the fixed prices and, with the bulk of fibre falling into second, third and fourth grades, the general range of prices was from 12/6d. to 15/- per stone.

The following were the weekly average prices of flax per stone, weighted on quantities purchased by the Control at fixed rates, as compared with the prices obtained in the open market a year ago:—

1939			1938		
Week ended	s.	d.	Week ended	s.	d.
9th December	...	13 10½	10th December	...	9 4½
16th December	...	13 8	17th December	...	9 5½
23rd December	...	13 10½	24th December	...	9 7
30th December	...	13 7	31st December	...	9 4½

HAY.—Accounts of the threshings generally indicated that the yields and quality of the seed were moderate to good, and at local markets sales of grass seed were effected at prices recording a further appreciable advance on the month. The average price per cwt. for Italian rye-grass seed showed the greatest increase, and the figure of 50/3¼d. was 18/6¼d. higher than the previous month's quotation. Perennial seed at 24/1¾d. was 8/7d. per cwt. dearer on the month, while mixed seed fetched on the average 7/3d. more than in November at 29/6½d. per cwt.

Although the yields of both meadow and upland hay last year were rather light, the stocks on most farms are now very little below normal. This is accounted for by the fact that, despite the shortage of imported food, farmers are economising as much as possible in their use of fodder, and are feeding hay only after full advantage has been taken of the exceptionally good grazing still available as a result of the mild season. The quality of the bulk of the hay on hands is of a high standard.

Hay at local markets was in firm request, and the average prices for both the upland and meadow qualities were dearer on the month. Upland hay at 106/1d. per ton was 8/5d. firmer, while meadow hay at 81/6d. was 7/6d. per ton dearer.

MANGELS.—This crop is keeping well in store, as the bulk of roots were lifted and pitted before the recent frosts. They are now being fed fairly liberally to stock on some farms, but the general practice is to feed cabbage and turnips first, and to keep the mangels for use later in the season.

TURNIPS.—The comparatively mild weather of the last two months allowed the roots to grow out well, and the crop is now in a very satisfactory condition. Turnips are generally sound this season, and they are keeping well. "Raen" disease has, however, caused a certain amount of damage to the roots on some farms. Although turnips are being fed freely to dairy stock there are still ample supplies on hands in most districts. The plentiful grass and the decrease in the numbers of fattening cattle being stall-fed have somewhat reduced the quantities of roots required for feeding.

POTATOES.—The keeping qualities of the tubers in pits and in stores have so far been very satisfactory, and the damage done by blight has been practically negligible, except in the case of Kerr's Pink and some of the early varieties.

Potatoes were used extensively last month to replace imported meals, and the amounts fed to pigs and poultry were exceptionally large. This has meant a considerable reduction in stocks on farms, but on account of the large crop in 1939, and the slow trade in this commodity with a consequent low level of prices there are still ample stocks available for requirements. It was noted, however, that towards the end of the month, when prices for potatoes steadily advanced, farmers were marketing larger quantities and, wherever possible, reducing the amount being fed to stock.

Both the shipping and local trade were rather quiet at the beginning of last month, but a firmer undertone was noticeable and, as the month advanced, substantial increases in prices were recorded. All varieties of the main crop marketed for local consumption recorded an advance of $1/0\frac{3}{4}$ d. per cwt. on the month at an average of $4/2\frac{1}{4}$ d. The principal variety, Arran Victory, was $1/5\frac{1}{4}$ d. dearer at $4/7\frac{1}{2}$ d. per cwt., while Kerr's Pink and British Queen also realised higher prices averaging $4/1$ d. and $5/1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per cwt. respectively.

The prices per ton paid to growers by shipping merchants for the week ended 6th January, 1940, eased somewhat from previous levels, and were—

		Bagged		Loose	
WARE	Arran Victory ...	£3 15	0 to £4 0 0	£3 10	0 to £3 15 0
	Arran Banner ...		£3 10 0		£3 0 0
	Kerr's Pink ...	£3 10	0 to £4 0 0		£3 10 0
	Majestic ...		£3 10 0		
	Gladstone ...		£4 10 0		
SEED	Arran Banner ...		£3 10 0		
	Arran Consul ...		£4 5 0		
	Arran Pilot ...	£5 10	0 to £6 0 0		
	Up-to-Date ...	£3 15	0 to £4 0 0		
	Majestic ...	£4 0	0 to £4 10 0		
	King Edward VII ...		£4 0 0		
	Great Scot ...		£4 5 0		

No shortage of seed potatoes is generally anticipated, but farmers should, nevertheless, make provision for planting time by exercising care in the disposal of stocks so as not to deplete their supplies of healthy seed.

A note on Potato Price Control appears on page 547.

CABBAGE AND KALE.—On farms where these crops were grown they provided a useful addition to the dairy cattle rations, and enabled farmers to conserve their supplies of roots, as well as replacing to some extent imported concentrates, and thus helping to maintain the milk yields. Stocks of cabbage and kale are, however, now nearing exhaustion in most instances.

OTHER VEGETABLES.—Home-grown produce marketed for local consumption during the month under review was generally sold at firmer prices. Savoys, however, fetched cheaper rates of 1/- to 1/7d. per dozen, and the average monthly price was reduced by 1¼d. to 1/3¼d. per dozen. Cabbage prices ranged from 10d. to 1/7d., and were firm on the month at an average price of 1/3¼d. per dozen; whilst cauliflowers, marketed principally in Belfast, were also firm in price at an average of 2/- per dozen. Leeks fetched from 4d. to 10d., and parsley 2d. to 5d. per bunch, and on average were ¼d. above the November prices at 5½d. and 3½d. per bunch respectively. Carrots realized from 6/6d. to 12/-, and averaged 8/9½d. per cwt., an increase of 1/6½d. over the month; and parsnips were 5½d. dearer on the month at 6/3¼d. per cwt. Garden turnips also firmed in price, and ranged from 1/- to 1/6d. per cwt.

FRUIT.

APPLES.—There were plentiful supplies of home-grown apples at Belfast market during the greater part of December, but trade continued dull at low prices. The principal culinary variety, Bramley's Seedling, made from 5/- to 8/- per ten stone barrel for good quality fruit, whilst lower grade produce was available at from 3/- to 6/-. Quotations for dessert varieties ranged from 4/- to 8/- per ten stone barrel.

Produce, other than home-grown, was available at the following rates: Canadian apples, 13/- to 16/- per box of 40 lb., and 30/- to 39/- per barrel; Canary Island tomatoes, 8/- to 10/6d. per boat of 22-24 lb.

LIVE STOCK.

CATTLE.—The health of store cattle remained very good throughout last month, and no reports of outbreaks of disease or other forms of ill health have been received. The condition of the animals is, on the whole, satisfactory, but varies a good deal throughout the country. The late grass and the comparatively mild temperatures have had a beneficial effect, but this has been partly offset by the general absence of hand-feeding.

The demand for store cattle was rather dull during December. Only forward animals in good condition were in request at former prices, and at the close of the month the general trend of quotations was downward.

The condition of cattle on grass remained good last month but, on account of the meal shortage, the bulk of the animals were not being fattened and were being carried over as stores. The numbers of cattle being stall-fed have shown a considerable decline for the same reason.

Supplies of beef cattle at fairs and marts last month encountered a brisker demand, and prices were further advanced.

Dairy cattle remained in good health during December and, except in a few areas where contagious abortion was rather prevalent, calving proceeded satisfactorily.

Trade in dairy cattle continued keen during the greater part of last month, but towards the close a weaker tendency became noticeable, and prices, except for promising young animals suitable for the shipping trade, tended to fall below previous high levels.

SHEEP.—The flocks were maintained in a good healthy condition last month. Liver fluke disease gave practically no trouble, but "foot rot" was fairly prevalent on some farms. Only a few lambs are yet to be seen, but with a high proportion of the ewes in lamb and in a strong healthy state, good results are generally anticipated.

Fat sheep and lambs were in fairly steady request last month, and prices, where altered, were dearer.

PIGS.—Business in young pigs was much slacker than in November, and sales were difficult to effect at considerably lower rates. Breeding sows were also in poor request and cheaper, while the practice of fattening sows and disposing of them for slaughter appears to be on the increase throughout the country. Pigs were marketed at lighter weights than usual in order to economise in the use of feeding stuffs. Supplies of pork met a steady demand at current fixed prices.

POULTRY.—The Christmas trade which appeared so promising early in December suffered a set-back about a week before the holiday. Producers who disposed of their birds early did so with advantage, but it is feared that a number held on in the hope of an advance in prices following a shortage of supplies, due to the curtailment of imports, and thereby suffered a disappointment in the subsequent slump in trade, and consequent fall in prices. Turkeys, which had been selling at high price levels of from 11d. to 1/6d. per lb. live weight during the earlier part of the month, maintained these rates up to the third week when they fell to lower levels, and the prices for geese also declined in the same period. Nevertheless, turkey prices were appreciably dearer than a year ago, the average price per lb. live weight being estimated at 1/1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. as compared with 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. for December, 1938; and geese, also, were dearer, averaging 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per lb. last month as against 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. for December, 1938.

The following were the average prices per head of other poultry sold alive during December: Chickens 2/10d., an increase of 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. on the month; hens

2/0 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. an increase of 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d., and ducks 2/7 $\frac{1}{4}$ d., an increase of 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. Although prices were dearer than in November last, there were no appreciable differences compared with the prices ruling for the last month of 1938. The live weight prices per lb. for poultry sold during December, with the quotations for December, 1938 shown in brackets, were: Chickens, large, 8d. to 10d. (7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. to 10d.), medium 7d. to 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. (7d. to 9d.), and small 7d. (6d. to 8d.); hens, 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. to 6d. (4d. to 6d.); ducks, 6d. to 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. (4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. to 7d.); turkeys, 8d. to 1/6d. (9d. to 1/-), and geese 4d. to 9d. (4d. to 6d.).

HORSES.—Supplies of horses at fairs were rather irregular, and the demand was also variable. Quotations were generally somewhat easier on the month; young working horses sold at from £18 up to £60 per head according to quality, older animals from £10 to £35, unbroken colts from £12 to £40, and foals from £8 to £30, with an extreme top of £40 for exceptional animals.

DAIRY PRODUCE.

MILK.—The mild weather and the exceptionally good grass for the time of year have been greatly appreciated during these difficult times, and have helped to maintain the milk yields at about seasonal levels. The shortage of concentrated foods, together with the high prices offered by shippers for cows have, however, resulted in many good animals being sold to shippers with the general effect that the supplies of milk being sent to the creameries were not so plentiful as in a normal season. The prices paid to producers for milk delivered at the creameries during last month were again firmer and ranged from 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. to 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per gallon, the separated milk being returned to the farmer.

As the average price paid for milk produced in Northern Ireland and delivered to creameries for manufacturing purposes for the month of November, 1939, exceeded the standard price provided for by the Milk and Milk Products Acts (Northern Ireland), 1934 to 1938, no equalisation payments will be made in respect of that month.

FARM BUTTER.—Supplies of print and lump butter offered at markets in Northern Ireland during December sold at firmer rates, the weighted average price of print butter being $\frac{1}{2}$ d. dearer at 1/5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb., and that for lump butter $\frac{1}{4}$ d. dearer at 1/4d. per lb. The general price ranges were: 1/2d. to 1/7d. per lb. for farmers' print butter, and 1/1d. to 1/6d. per lb. for lump.

EGGS.—Producers' prices fixed weekly by the Ministry of Agriculture for hen and duck eggs recorded a decline during December. A table of these prices, together with those ruling during the corresponding weeks in 1938, appears on page 542.

THE PLOUGHING-UP CAMPAIGN.

GOOD PROGRESS MAINTAINED.

There are increasing signs everywhere throughout the country of the very active steps being taken by farmers in Northern Ireland to fulfil their responsibilities to the community by growing more food this year, so that the need for importing supplies from abroad may be drastically curtailed during these difficult times.

It is generally appreciated that our security depends no less on the plough than on the gun in this grim struggle, and the dependence of one on the other may be briefly illustrated by the fact that if the plough were worked to its fullest capacity it would mean substantially increased production to reduce the necessity for imports of food from overseas, and to allow more of our ships and our credits abroad to bring to our shores greater supplies of machines and material of modern warfare with which to defeat the common enemy in the battlefield. Again, as Napoleon has said, "An army marches on its stomach", there is the need for keeping the nation "fighting fit", and there is no doubt that the home-grown foods which sufficed to maintain our sturdy forbears will be adequate for our needs in the present conflict. It is meet, therefore, that the farmer should make a whole-hearted response, and "as the labourer is worthy of his hire" every encouragement is to be given him in the great task; besides the ploughing grant of £2 per acre for bringing old grassland back into tillage, prices will be guaranteed for the produce based on cost of production, so that farmers will be in the unusual position in these days of being able to count on a satisfactory return for their work. At the beginning of the year, therefore, farmers are in a much more hopeful position than they have been for a very considerable time past, and there is no doubt that they will make the best use of the opportunities for helping their country in its hour of need and, at the same time, benefiting themselves.

THE PLOUGHING GRANT.

The steady flow of applications for grants of £2 per acre for ploughing up old grassland continues, and to date some 30,000 applications have been received, covering a total area of 165,000 acres. Already some 1,250 applications have been dealt with, and payments amounting to £14,000 have been made. In connection with the operation of this Scheme it has come to the notice of the Ministry that some farmers are reluctant to plough grassland over and above what is required of them under the Compulsory Tillage Order,

because they fear that such additional cultivation in 1940 will result in their being called upon in the following year (1941) to till a greater area than if they had merely been content to fulfil their obligations for the present year. The Ministry desires, therefore, to make it perfectly clear that in any Tillage Order that may be in force in 1941 the area to be cultivated will be based on the 1939 tillage area, and not on the 1940 tillage area. Farmers, therefore, may rest assured that any additional cultivation carried out by them in 1940 will, on no account, re-act to their detriment in 1941.

COMPULSORY TILLAGE ORDER.

Further to the operations of this Scheme the Ministry has learned that there is an impression among farmers in certain areas, particularly those adjacent to the larger centres of population, that because their land has been mainly or entirely used for certain purposes, such as the grazing of milch cows and the production of milk, they are automatically relieved of their obligations under the Compulsory Tillage Order. The Ministry wishes to emphasise in this connection that the Tillage Order applies to every holding which comprises 10 acres or more of arable land, unless in certain exceptional cases where the holdings, or part of them, are specially exempted by the Ministry. Such exemptions, however, are granted only where application is made to the Ministry in writing, and where the Ministry is satisfied that the cultivation of the holding would be of less service to the community than if the holding were used in some other way.

TRACTORS.

Progress continues to be made in the distribution of the Fordson tractors imported by the Ministry. These tractors are being distributed to districts where machines are most needed. In addition, a considerable number of tractors have been sold by the tractor agents in the ordinary course of their business. There are now fully 1,000 tractors operating in Northern Ireland, and it is hoped that very soon every district will be sufficiently well supplied to enable the 1940 ploughing programme to be carried out in good time. Farmers are, however, again very strongly urged to make every effort to have their ploughing completed as soon as possible, and they are reminded that orders should be placed now for all implements and machines required for spring cultivation and for harvesting this year's crops.

The courses of training in tractor work at Greenmount Agricultural College have been continued with marked success. Each course extends over a period of two weeks, and about 24 men are admitted at a time. The sixth of such courses is at present being held. No fees are charged to the trainees, and board and lodgings are provided free of charge. Those who have been

trained up to now have expressed their appreciation of the value of the instruction provided. The majority of them are now operating their own tractors, whilst many others have found employment with tractor owners.

On the 10th January the Ministry, with the assistance of the leading distributing agents in Northern Ireland, held a Tractor Ploughing Demonstration on the Stormont Estate. All the principal makes of tractors now being sold in this country, 11 in all, were demonstrated, the operations consisting of ploughing and disc-harrowing. The event proved of widespread interest, and provided an excellent opportunity for farmers to compare the different makes of tractors used, and their capabilities. Farmers were present in large numbers from all over the country. This Demonstration was organised strictly on an educational basis, and was in no sense competitive. It proved of much value to tractor owners and those who are contemplating the purchase of such machines.

During the course of the Demonstration a film was made showing the different makes of tractors at work, and emphasising the comparison in speed between tractor ploughing and horse ploughing. It is hoped that this film will soon be available for distribution, and that it will be exhibited in the majority of cinemas throughout the Province.

The bringing together of the different makes of tractors, all operating under similar and practical working conditions, provided a unique opportunity for those who were present, or who will see the film, of deciding in their own minds the type that is best suited to the needs of their own farms and districts.

SUPPLIES OF FERTILISERS.

In the November issue of the Monthly Report details were given regarding the fertiliser position. It is now possible to amplify the details given in this note.

Large quantities of manures are already in the hands of the various fertiliser merchants throughout Northern Ireland, and these stocks are being renewed by the manufacturers as farmers are taking delivery of their fertiliser requirements. The figures available indicate that very much larger quantities are actually in the hands of merchants and farmers than for the corresponding period last year. Supplies which have already been manufactured are approximately equal to those used in the whole of last season, and manufacturing is still proceeding. It is realised that the demand this season for fertilisers will be considerably greater than that in the past season, because of increased tillage, but there is every reason to hope that no farmer need be short of his requirements.

Arrangements have been made for ample supplies of sulphate of ammonia to be available, and supplies of nitro-chalk will be available in a week or so's time.

The supply position regarding potash manures is very much better than was anticipated, but it will be important to use these supplies where they are most likely to give a response.

Apart from potatoes, the flax crop is one which requires dressings of potassic manures, and it will be important to see that supplies of potash will be available for the increased acreage of flax which will be grown this year.

The ploughing of old grassland for the grant of £2 per statute acre must be completed by the 31st March next. Farmers are, therefore, advised to get their ploughing done as soon as possible so as to make sure they will qualify for the grant.

MARKETING SCHEMES AND ENACTMENTS.

LIVESTOCK AND MEAT CONTROL SCHEME. A SHORT EXPLANATION.

The Scheme for Livestock and Meat Control, which came into operation on the 15th January, 1940, has been devised as a United Kingdom Scheme by the Ministry of Food and, in Northern Ireland, will be operated by the Ministry of Agriculture acting as agents for the Ministry of Food.

The Scheme was framed, having regard to experience gained during the last war, and its main objects are to ensure that the United Kingdom supply of meat, whether home-produced or imported, is allocated fairly, that the producer receives a reasonable price for his animals, and that the consumer has not to pay unreasonable prices for meat. The Scheme also aims at securing that all by-products are efficiently dealt with and put to the best possible use.

While the Scheme in its application in Northern Ireland will follow the main lines of the Scheme in Great Britain, there will be certain modifications arising from the different set of circumstances which affect the Northern Ireland meat supply as compared with that across the Channel. The chief difference in this regard between Northern Ireland and Great Britain is, of course, the fact that in Northern Ireland there is practically no trade in imported meat, whereas in Great Britain imported meat represents the bulk of the normal consumption.

FAT CATTLE AND SHEEP.

The Scheme, in so far as Northern Ireland is concerned, requires that on and from 15th January, 1940, all fat cattle and sheep for slaughter must be sold only to authorised Purchasing Officers of the Ministry. Purchases will be made at the various centres listed on page 538, at which it has been the practice to certify cattle for Subsidy purposes. Producers who wish to offer stock for purchase at these centres must give to the Ministry 12 days' notice in writing as to the numbers and class of animals which they wish to offer.

In order to facilitate producers in this connection simple forms of notification have been prepared and may be procured from any R.U.C. Barracks. The prices for the different classes of livestock will vary according to the grade of the animals, and will be fixed by the Minister of Food.

It is important to note that all stock for purchase should reach the purchasing centres early in the forenoon so that the transport from the centres of the stock purchased may be facilitated.

Purchasing Officers will send to each of the 17 slaughter-houses, which have been authorised in Northern Ireland for the purposes of the Scheme, sufficient stock to meet the demands of the butchers throughout Northern Ireland. Surplus stock will be shipped to Great Britain.

At each of the authorised slaughter-houses there will be a manager appointed by the Ministry of Agriculture, who will arrange for the efficient slaughtering of the animals and for the proper distribution of meat to butchers. In their turn, butchers will purchase meat at fixed prices, which will have regard to the quality of the meat, and will subsequently retail the meat at fixed maximum prices which will vary in accordance with the particular cuts demanded by the consumer. In all cases prices will be fixed by the Minister of Food.

PIGS.

In so far as pigs are concerned, those sold dead will continue to be sold direct by producers to curers. It will, however, be necessary that a carcass card should be obtained beforehand from a curer in respect of each carcass, as otherwise the curer will be compelled to refuse to take delivery of carcasses. In the case of pigs sold alive they may be delivered as heretofore at the collecting depots which have been operated by the Pigs Marketing Board, and which are listed on page 540.

The foregoing is necessarily only a brief outline of the chief points of the Scheme, and persons who may desire more detailed information as to any particular point should apply to the Minister, although Purchasing Officers, Slaughter-house managers and officials at collecting depots for pigs will probably be in a position to deal with enquiries.

Details of the arrangements for Northern Ireland are given in the following pages.

SUMMARY OF PRICES OF NORTHERN IRELAND LIVESTOCK.

The Ministry, acting as agents for the Ministry of Food will purchase live-stock at Northern Ireland centres at the prices shown below. These prices reflect the increases in the maximum prices of feeding stuffs, which came into operation on 8th January, which are referred to on page 576 of this Report, and take into account the difficulties experienced by farmers in feeding their stock under war conditions, and the general higher level of commodity prices. These prices will be adjusted in accordance with normal seasonal trends, and will be subject to review in the event of any material change in circumstances.

I. FAT CATTLE.

(1) Steers, Heifers and Cow-heifers.

(a) Home-bred.

Grade				Killing out percentage	Price per live cwt.
Special	...	...	...	60 and over	64/6
A	...	...	...	58 and under 60	61/6
				57	60/-
				56	58/6
B	...	...	...	55	56/-
				54	54/6
				53	53/-
C	...	...	...	52	46/6
				51	44/-
				50	41/6

The above prices include a sum equivalent to the subsidy at present payable for fat cattle under the Livestock Industry Act, 1937, which on January 15th, 1940, will cease to be paid direct to farmers, but will be credited by the Exchequer to the Meat and Livestock Fund of the Ministry. The prices which will be paid for any home-bred cattle purchased by the Ministry which have previously been certified for cattle subsidy will, in the case of animals of special grade or grade A, be 7/6d. per cwt. and, in the case of animals of Grade B, be 5/- per cwt less than those set out above.

(2) Fat Cows.

Grade			Killing out percentage	Price per live cwt.
A	...	...	55 and over	38/-
			54	36/-
			53	34/-
B	...	...	52	31/6
			51	29/6
			50	27/6
C	...	...	49	25/-
			48	23/-
			47	21/-

(3) Bulls.

Grade			Killing out percentage	Price per live cwt.
A	...	...	58 and over	40/-
			57	39/-
			56	38/-
B		...	55	36/6
			54	35/6
			53	34/6
C	...	...	53	31/-
			51	28/-
			50	25/-

II. CALVES.

(1) VEAL CALVES.

First quality 13d. per lb., estimated dressed carcase weight.

Second quality 11d. per lb., estimated dressed carcase weight.

Third quality 7d. per lb., estimated dressed carcase weight.

Calves which are neither genuine veal calves nor "bobbies", but are fit for the retail meat trade will be classed as third quality.

(2) BOBBIES AND BONERS.

These calves are suitable only for manufacture.

Large	...	...	25/- per head.
Medium	...	...	20/- "
Small	...	...	15/- "

III. SHEEP AND LAMBS.

(1) FAT SHEEP.

The price to be paid for fat sheep will be on the basis of an annual average price of 12d. per lb. estimated dressed carcase weight. The price for the initial period will be 12d. per lb. estimated dressed carcase weight.

(2) FAT LAMBS.

The price to be paid for fat lambs will be $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. above the price payable for sheep. An animal will be classed as a lamb until the date of shearing in the year following birth. The price of lambs for the initial period will be $13\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. estimated dressed carcase weight.

(3) SUCKING LAMBS.

It is recognised that farmers have already made arrangements for the production of sucking lambs for the present season. For this reason a special price of $1\frac{1}{5}$ d. per lb. will be paid for the present season only until 30th April, 1940.

(4) EWES.

The price to be paid for fat ewes will be subject to the same seasonal variations as those for fat sheep. For fat ewes estimated to kill out at not more than 64 lb. the price will be 4d. per lb. less than the price payable for sheep and for fat ewes estimated to kill out at more than 64 lb. the price will be 5d. per lb. less than the price payable for sheep. The price for any lean ewes purchased for slaughter will be standardised at 4d. per lb.

The initial prices which will be paid for ewes will, therefore, be as follows :

Fat light weight ewes	...	8d. per lb. estimated dressed carcase weight.
Other fat ewes	...	7d. " " " "
Lean ewes	...	4d. " " " "

Provision will be made so that the amount paid in respect of a fat ewe exceeding 64 lb. estimated dressed carcase weight shall not be less than that payable in respect of a fat ewe of 64 lb. estimated dressed carcase weight.

(5) RAMS.

Fat ram prices will also be subject to the same seasonal variations as those for fat sheep, being fixed at 5d. per lb. below the prescribed price for fat sheep. For the initial period, therefore, fat rams will be purchased at 7d. per lb. estimated dressed carcase weight.

The price for any lean ram purchased for slaughter will be standardised at 3d. per lb. estimated dressed carcase weight.

Young tup rams will be regarded as rams if showing male characteristics.

N.B.—The fixed prices for cattle and sheep are the same as those ruling in Great Britain.

List of approved Purchasing Centres in Northern Ireland for Fat Cattle and Sheep, and the days in each month on which animals will be purchased.

Antrim,	Last Thursday.	Garvagh,	Third Friday.
Armagh,	First Thursday.	Glenarm,	Third Wednesday.
Armoy,	Fourth Friday.	Irvinestown,	Second Monday.
Aughnacloy,	First Wednesday.	Keady,	Second Friday.
Ballycastle,	Second Tuesday.	Kilkeel,	Last Wednesday.
Ballyclare,	First and third Mondays.	Killylea,	Second Wednesday and last Friday.
Ballygawley,	Second Friday.		Second and fourth Wednesdays.
Ballymena,	First and third Saturdays.	Kilrea,	First Monday.
Ballymoncy,	Every Monday.	Kircubbin,	Second and fourth Thursdays.
Ballynahinch,	Third Thursday.	Larne,	Each Monday.
Banbridge,	Last Monday.	Limavady,	Second Monday.
Belfast,	Every Tuesday.	Lisburn,	Third Wednesday.
Bellaghy,	First Monday.	Lisnaskea,	Each Wednesday.
Bushmills,	Third Thursday.	Londonderry,	Second Thursday.
Camlough,	Third Monday.	Lurgan,	Last Tuesday.
Castleberg,	Last Friday.	Maghera,	Second Thursday.
Castlewellan,	Second Monday.	Magherafelt,	Third Friday.
Claudy,	Third Tuesday.	Markethill,	Fourth Monday.
Clogher,	Third Friday.	Money more,	First Friday and third Monday.
Cloughmills,	Third Wednesday.	Moy,	Every Monday except the third.
Coleraine,	Every Tuesday, except 2nd week Thursday.	Newry,	Second and fourth Mondays.
Cookstown,	First Saturday.	Newtownards,	First Tuesday.
Crossgar,	Second Wednesday.	Newtownbutler,	Last Monday.
Crossmaglen,	First Friday.	Newtownstewart,	First Tuesday.
Crumlin,	First Monday.	Omagh,	Third Saturday.
Cushendall,	Second Friday.	Portadown,	First Saturday.
Donemanagh,	Last Thursday.	Poyntzpass,	First and third Wednesdays.
Downpatrick,	Second Friday and last Saturday.	Rathfriland,	Last Wednesday.
Draperstown,	First Friday.	Saintfield,	Third Thursday.
Dromore,	Second Saturday.	Sixmilecross,	First and third Wednesdays.
Dungannon,	Third Thursday.	Stewartstown,	First Thursday.
Dungiven,	Second Tuesday.		
Enniskillen,	Second and fourth Wednesday.		
Fintona,	Third Tuesday.		
Fivemiletown,	First Friday.		

Stock for sale should be at the centres not later than 8 a.m.

PIG PRICES IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

On and after Monday, the 15th January, all pigs in Northern Ireland intended for slaughter for human consumption, and all pig carcasses will be purchased by or on behalf of the Ministry of Food, for whom the Ministry of Agriculture in Northern Ireland will act as agents at the following prices.

All live pigs intended for slaughter must be presented at one or other of the approved collecting Depots in Northern Ireland as listed on page 540. At these centres they will be purchased by the Government buyers.

Pig carcasses may continue to be sold to curers in Northern Ireland as at present, all existing roll and ham curers being specially authorised to purchase pig carcasses. Every producer who wishes to sell pig carcasses must, however, obtain a carcass card from the curer before he slaughters his pig. A curer will be precluded from purchasing a pig carcass unless it is accompanied by a carcass card.

The following prices will apply in respect of pigs purchased :

Pigs weighing from 100 lbs. to 160 lbs. live weight—
67/6 per cwt. live weight.

Pigs weighing from 112 lbs. to 180 lbs. dead weight—
sold alive 103/7 per cwt. dead weight.
sold dead 99/- " "

Pigs weighing from 181 lbs. to 200 lbs. dead weight—
sold alive 100/10 per cwt. dead weight.
sold dead 96/6 " "

Pigs weighing from 201 lbs. to 220 lbs. dead weight—
sold alive 98/- per cwt. dead weight.
sold dead 94/- " "

Pigs weighing from 221 lbs. to 240 lbs. dead weight—
sold alive 92/5 per cwt. dead weight.
sold dead 88/6 " "

Pigs weighing over 240 lbs. dead weight—
sold alive 89/7 per cwt. dead weight.
sold dead 85/6 " "

Rig Pigs—
sold alive 92/5 per cwt. dead weight.
sold dead 88/6 " "

Stag Pigs—
sold alive 70/- per cwt. dead weight.
sold dead 66/- " "

Boars—
sold alive 50/5 per cwt. dead weight.
sold dead 46/6 " "

Sows—
All sows will be purchased on a live weight basis of 51/- per live cwt.

These prices will be subject to the following deductions in respect of insurance :

Live pigs 6d. per pig ; dead pigs 4d. per pig ; sows 2/- per pig.

All pigs and pig carcasses sold will also be subject to a deduction of 8d. per pig in respect of the administrative levy of the Pigs Marketing Board.

In the case of pig carcasses the following reductions will be made for damage certified in writing by a veterinary officer of the Ministry of Agriculture for Northern Ireland :—

Broken Ham (dry, shank and/or shell bone break)	5%	of the value of the carcase.
Broken Ham (wet break)	...	12½% of the value of the carcase.
Shoulder stuck carcase	...	3/- per shoulder affected.

N.B.—These fixed prices are the same as those ruling in Great Britain.

List of Approved Collecting Depots for Pigs sold alive and
Days in each week on which Animals will be accepted.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Belfast Lisburn Limavady Dungiven Londonderry Dungannon Cookstown Magherafelt Maghera	Ballymena Kilrea Clogher Ballygawley Portadown Newry Castlewellan Ballynahinch Downpatrick	Larne Antrim Ballymoney Coleraine Irvinestown Enniskillen Lisnaskea Armagh Banbridge	Victoria Bridge Omagh Newtownards

NORTHERN IRELAND PIG PRICES IN OPERATION UNTIL 13th JANUARY, 1940.

The following prices were fixed as and from 4th December, 1939, by a Determination of the Pig Industry Council made under Section Five of the Agricultural Marketing (Pig Industry) Act (Northern Ireland), 1934.

I. Pigs sold alive (other than pigs specified in III below).

Weighing	c.1.0.0 to c.1.2.2	...	...	90/-	per dead cwt.
„	c.1.2.3. to c.2.0.0	...	...	85/-	„
„	c.2.0.1 to c.2.0.14	...	...	81/-	„

II. Pigs sold dead (other than pigs specified in III below).

Weighing	c.1.0.0 to c.1.2.2	...	...	84/-	per dead cwt.
„	c.1.2.3 to c.2.0.0	...	...	79/6	„
„	c.2.0.1 to c.2.0.14	...	...	75/3	„

III. Live or dead Sows	...	...	...	58/4	per dead cwt.
„ Rigs	...	...	...	72/9	„
„ Stags	...	...	...	50/5	„
„ Boars	...	...	...	28/-	„

BUTTER PRICES.

Under the Butter (Maximum Prices) Order, 1940, made by the Minister of Food, which came into force on the 8th January, the maximum retail price of butter remains unchanged at 1/7d. per lb. In calculating the retail price for a small quantity any fraction of a farthing will be regarded as one farthing.

On a sale by wholesale delivered to buyers' premises the maximum price will be at the rate of 150s. per cwt., and on a first hand sale "ex store" at the rate of 143s. per cwt. Where, on a first-hand sale or on a sale by a wholesaler to a retailer, the butter is delivered in rolls, bricks or packets weighing not more than 1 lb. each, an additional charge at a rate not exceeding 6/- per cwt. may be made.

It has been decided that the butter shall be known as "National Butter"; and the Order provides that on and after the 1st February, 1940, butter sold by retail shall be clearly and conspicuously marked with the words "National Butter". The Order also provides that except under the terms of a licence granted by or under the authority of the Minister of Food, no wrapper containing National Butter shall on and after 30th March, 1940, bear any words descriptive of such butter other than the words "National Butter".

MARKETING OF EGGS ACTS (N.I.) 1924—1937

NORTHERN IRELAND EGG PRICES (PRODUCERS).

The following table shows the prices fixed by the Ministry, and payable by licensed wholesale dealers, for eggs purchased from producers during the weeks specified, as compared with the prices fixed for the corresponding weeks of 1938.

				1939		1938	
				Hen eggs per lb.*	Duck eggs per doz.*	Hen eggs per lb.	Duck eggs per doz.
				s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
December	2nd	...	...	1 5 $\frac{3}{4}$	2 1	1 1	1 5
"	9th	...	...	1 4	1 10	0 11	1 5
"	16th	...	...	1 2	1 8	0 11	1 5
"	23rd	...	...	1 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 8	1 0	1 5
"	30th	...	...	1 1	1 8	0 11 $\frac{1}{4}$	1 5

*When hen eggs are delivered by the producer to the packing store of a licensed Wholesale dealer of Class A an additional $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. is payable; in the case of duck eggs an additional $\frac{2}{3}$ d. is payable for each complete dozen so delivered.

Payment on a quality basis came into operation during the week ended 5th March, 1938.

The following were the standard deductions :—

Hen Eggs : Seconds and soiled eggs, $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per egg; Rejects, 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per egg during the week ended 2nd December, 2d. per egg and 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per egg during the weeks ended 9th and 16th December, afterwards 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per egg.

Duck Eggs : Rejects, 2d. per egg during the week ended 2nd December, afterwards 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per egg.

EGGS.

MAXIMUM PRICES.

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL.

The following maximum prices, as fixed by the Ministry of Food, were in operation up to 20th December, 1939, on which date, by a further Order, the prices of home-produced eggs were revoked, and the market decontrolled. The prices, as stated in categories II., III., IV. and V. for imported eggs, remain in force.

Category		Maximum prices.		
		by importer	by wholesaler	by retail
I	Home produced fresh eggs (a)	per 120	per 120	per doz.
	(eggs produced in Great Britain and (b)	—	27/-	3/-
	Northern Ireland) (c)	—	22/-	2/6
		—	17/-	2/-
II	*Eire fresh eggs (a)	21/-	22/-	2/6
	(b)	18/6	19/6	2/3
III	Eggs produced in Belgium, Denmark, (a)	18/6	19/6	2/3
	Estonia, Finland, France, Holland, (b)	16/-	17/-	2/-
IV	†Eggs produced in the Dominions (except South African eggs marked "Cooking"), North and South America, and home-produced cold-stored, chilled or gas stored eggs (a)	13/9	14/9	1/9
	(b)	11/6	12/6	1/6
V	All eggs other than home-produced eggs and those specified above (a)	13/9	14/9	1/9
	(b)	11/6	12/6	1/6
	(c)	9/9	10/6	1/3

*Eggs from Eire are now placed in a separate category and may be sold at prices higher than those charged for other "near European eggs" by 3d. per dozen retail, and 2/6 per 120 wholesale.

†Eggs from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are now transferred to the "near European" category.

Other prices have been raised by 3d. per dozen retail and 2/- to 2/6 wholesale compared with the previous Order of October 20th. Maximum prices for sales by importers have also been specified for all imported eggs in Categories II, III, IV and V. These prices are 1/- per 120 below the wholesale price for all categories except V (c) where the difference is 9d. per 120.

(a) Minimum weight 15 lbs. per 120 (no 12 eggs to weigh less than 22½ ozs.).

(b) Categories I to IV—Minimum weight 12 lbs. per 120 (no 12 eggs to weigh less than 17½ ozs.). Category V—All eggs less than 15 lbs. per 120, other than eggs produced in China, Egypt and Roumania weighing less than 12 lbs. per 120.

(c) Category I—All eggs less than 12 lbs. per 120.

Category V—Eggs produced in China, Egypt and Roumania weighing less than 12 lbs. per 120.

RETAIL PRICES OF MILK.

The Joint Milk Council for Northern Ireland has determined that the following prices for milk sold by retail shall apply from Sunday, 31st December, 1939, and until further notice.

In the Boroughs of Coleraine, Ballymena and Larne, and the Urban Districts of Armagh, Ballymoney, Banbridge, Dungannon, Enniskillen, Lurgan, Newry, Omagh, Portadown and Strabane :

from the 31st day of December, 1939, to the 30th day of April, 1940, inclusive,

Milk of Grade A—not less than 2/4 per gallon.

Milk of Grade B—not less than 2/2 per gallon.

Milk of Grade C—not less than 2/- per gallon

from the 1st day of May, 1940, to the 30th day of September, 1940, inclusive,

Milk of Grade A—not less than 2/2 per gallon

Milk of Grade B—not less than 2/- per gallon.

Milk of Grade C—not less than 1/10 per gallon.

In the Urban Districts of Ballycastle, Donaghadee, Newcastle, Portrush, Portstewart, Warrenpoint and Whitehead :

from the 31st day of September, 1939, to the 30th day of September, 1940, inclusive,

Milk of Grade A—not less than 2/4 per gallon.

Milk of Grade B—not less than 2/2 per gallon.

Milk of Grade C—not less than 2/- per gallon.

In all other areas in Northern Ireland :

from the 31st day of December, 1939, to the 30th day of April, 1940, inclusive,

Milk of Grade A—not less than 2/2 per gallon.

Milk of Grade B—not less than 2/- per gallon.

Milk of Grade C—not less than 1/10 per gallon.

from the 1st day of May, 1940, to the 30th day of September, 1940, inclusive,

Milk of Grade A—not less than 2/- per gallon.

Milk of Grade B—not less than 1/10 per gallon.

Milk of Grade C—not less than 1/8 per gallon.

Provided that the prices at which milk of Grade B or milk of Grade C may be sold shall not exceed the following prices during the periods specified :

31st day of December, 1939, to 30th day of June, 1940, and 1st day of September, 1940, to 30th day of September, 1940.

Milk of Grade B—2/4 per gallon.

Milk of Grade C—2/2 per gallon.

1st day of July, 1940, to 31st day of August, 1940,

Milk of Grade B—2/2 per gallon.

Milk of Grade C—2/- per gallon.

WOOL CONTROL.

Under the Defence Regulations, 1939, the Minister of Supply has made two further Orders which relate to wool produced in the United Kingdom (other than the Orkneys, Shetlands and Outer Hebrides).

The first of these (The Control of Wool (No. 9) Order, 1939) brought into force on the 15th December, 1939, new maximum prices for ungraded farmers' clips. The second Order (The Control of Wool (No. 10) Order, 1939) requisitions wool still owned by farmers. Provision is also made for securing returns in regard to such wool, and the owners are required to comply with any directions issued as to the removal, transport, keeping, storage, disposal or delivery of such wool.

SCHEDULE TO THE CONTROL OF WOOL (No. 9) ORDER, 1939.

BRITISH WOOLS: FARMERS' CLIPS (NOT GRADED).

Description					Maximum Price	
					Washed	Greasy
	England				d.	d.
Lincoln Hogs and Wethers	...	...	...	...	12½	10½
Notts, Leicester and Yorkshire Hogs and Wethers	...	...	...	...	12½	10½
order Leicesters	...	...	...	...	12½	10½
Notts, Yorkshire, Lincoln and Leicester Halfbreds	...	...	...	...	12½	10½
Norfolk Halfbreds	...	...	...	...	—	10
Best Shropshires	...	...	...	...	14¼	11
Wilts and Hants Downs	...	...	...	...	—	11½
Sussex Southdowns	...	...	...	...	17	13½
Oxford Downs	...	...	...	...	—	10½
Dorset Downs and Horns	...	...	...	...	17½	11½
Eastern Counties Downs	...	...	...	...	—	10½
Kent Tegs	...	...	...	...	11½	10½
Kent Ewes and Wethers	...	...	...	...	11½	10½
Kent Half Bred Downs	...	...	...	...	12¼	10½
Unsorted Kent and Kent Half Bred Lambs	...	...	...	...	—	8¾
Devon, Cornwall and Somerset Strong	...	...	...	...	—	9¼
Devon, Cornwall and Somerset Crossbred	...	...	...	...	—	10
Exmoor Horns	...	...	...	...	11½	10
Cluns and Best Kerries	...	...	...	...	13¾	10½
Fine Radnors	...	...	...	...	11½	8¾
Deep Radnors	...	...	...	...	11	8¼
Best Welsh Fleece (English Grown)	...	...	...	...	10¼	8¼
Swaledale	...	...	...	...	—	10½
Scotch	...	...	...	...	—	9¾
Good Medium Messams	...	...	...	...	—	9¾
North Halfbred Hogs (excluding Scotland Border Counties)	...	...	...	...	12¼	10½
North Halfbred Wethers (excluding Scotland Border Counties)	...	...	...	...	12¼	10½
Herdwicks	...	...	...	...	—	9
Ripons	...	...	...	...	—	10½
Wales						
Shropshire and Best Kerry	...	...	...	...	14¼	11
Fine Crossbred	...	...	...	...	12¾	8¾
Radnors and Crossbreds	...	...	...	...	11½	8¾

Description						Maximum Prices	
						Washed	Greasy
						d.	d.
Wales—continued							
Fine Welsh	...	...	...	...	...	11½	8½
Ordinary Welsh	...	...	...	...	...	11	8½
Turbary Welsh	...	...	...	...	...	8½	—
Washed Shorn Lambs Wool—							
Shropshire and Best Kerry	...	...	...	...	...	11	8½
Radnor and Crossbred	...	...	...	...	...	8½	6½
Welsh Lambs	...	...	...	...	...	8½	6½
Scotland.							
Cheviot Ewe and Hog	...	...	...	...	...	14½	12½
Halfbred Hog and Wether	...	...	...	...	...	12½	11½
Lesters	...	...	...	...	...	—	11
Crosses	...	...	...	...	...	—	10
Blackfaced	...	...	...	...	...	—	10
Northern Ireland							
Suffolk Downs	...	...	...	...	...	—	10½
Fine Halfbreds	...	...	...	...	...	—	10½
Lesters	...	...	...	...	...	—	10
Crosses 6	...	...	...	...	...	—	9
Blackfaced	...	...	...	...	...	—	9½

The maximum prices set out above are for good, clean washed or light greasy wool delivered F.O.R. within a reasonable distance, if required. In the case of intermediate or inferior wools the prices applicable shall be in proportion. The maximum prices for willeyed locks; the maximum prices for washed or greasy locks, brokes, fallen or gathered wool and tailings; and the maximum prices for daggings and clarts; shall be in proportion to the prices paid for fleece wool. The expression "in proportion" in relation to the price applicable to any goods has the meaning which is commonly given to that expression in the wool industry.

HOME-GROWN OATS.

THE FIXING OF MAXIMUM PRICES.

It has already been announced that an Order will be made by the Minister of Food at an early date to bring under control the sale and distribution of home-grown oats and to prescribe maximum prices for such oats.

The maximum price to be paid to the farmer for oats for feeding to livestock will be the same as that prescribed for imported oats in the Feeding Stuff (Maximum Prices) Order, 1940, which came into force on Monday, 8th Jan., namely, 11s. per hundredweight. For oats for milling the maximum price will be 13s. per hundredweight until February 29, 1940, and 12s. per hundredweight thereafter. Further consideration has been given to the question of seed oats in the light of discussions with representatives of the organisations

concerned, and it is proposed that while sale of seed oats will be subject to control on the same lines as seed wheat no maximum price will be prescribed this season.

A separate order will be made providing in the case of Northern Ireland for certain modifications of the principal order.

FLAX.

The Ministry has been authorised by the Minister of Supply to announce that the price for the 1940 Northern Ireland flax crop has been fixed at 17/6d. to 22/6d. per stone, with an average price of 20/- per stone.

REQUISITION OF FLAX SEED IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

Under the Control of Flax Seed (No. 1) Order, 1940, made by the Minister of Supply, persons owning or in possession of one ton or more of flax seed in Northern Ireland are required to hold such seed at the disposal of the Minister and to comply with any directions he may issue as to the disposal of the seed. A written declaration is required to be sent forthwith to the Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Stormont, Belfast, stating the descriptions, quantities and qualities of seed held, and the name and location of the place, premises or vessels in which it is located. The prices at which flax seed held by the Government will be sold to wholesalers, retailers and farmers in Northern Ireland will be fixed by the Ministry and an announcement on this matter will be made at the earliest possible date.

POTATO PRICE CONTROL.

WARE.

The Ministry of Agriculture for Northern Ireland, in conjunction with the Ministry of Food and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, will, as soon as the necessary consultations with the various interests have been completed, introduce a plan for regulating potato prices.

It is proposed to fix minimum and maximum farm prices and maximum margins on re-sale by wholesale and retail. Scales will be prescribed to provide, where feasible, for soil classifications and quality factors.

It is proposed to establish an Insurance Fund by the collection of a tonnage levy from first buyers on re-sale. No deduction will be made from growers' prices. The Fund will be used to meet the cost of the scheme of control and to ensure to farmers a reasonable return for any surplus ware potatoes remaining at the end of the season. Riddle regulations and standards of dressing will be enforced and provision will be made, where feasible, for the disposal of off-grade samples under licence.

Sales by growers will be restricted to licensed first buyers, of whom there will be three classes, viz., licensed wholesalers, licensed retailers, and licensed grower-salesmen. No grower of potatoes other than a licensed potato merchant or a licensed grower-salesman may sell potatoes to any person other than a licensed potato merchant or a licensed retailer except by special licence. All licensed first buyers will be required to make periodical returns of their transactions, and the levy will be made upon the periodical tonnage sold by them.

Producers and traders will be required to keep records of their sales, for this is a necessary part of the machinery of control.

The provision of factory and other outlets for surplus potatoes (e.g., increased use for livestock feeding) is receiving active consideration, and steps are being taken to bring before the public the advantages to the nation in present circumstances of an increased consumption of potatoes.

SEED.

Under the Seed Potato Price Control Plan, it is intended that:—

1. The existing control of seed potato sales shall be extended in order to ensure reasonable prices to growers and planters of seed, to prescribe distributive margins and to safeguard supplies. The maximum prices now in force will be replaced by a system of prescribed growers' prices, and maximum distributors' margins for re-sale. Larger margins will be allowed for the sale of mixed wagons and small quantities.

2. Sales by growers will be restricted to licensed first buyers. A special list of seed buyers, consisting of wholesale seed merchants, large retailers and semi-wholesalers, has been prepared. Qualification for inclusion in this list is based mainly upon previous trading in seed potatoes with producers. It should be noted that the possession of a licence to purchase ware potatoes from producers does not qualify a buyer to purchase seed potatoes.

3. All licensed first buyers will be required to pay the prescribed prices to producers, to keep records of their transactions, and to pay a small levy to the potato insurance fund. The levy will be on a tonnage basis, and first buyers will be required to make returns upon which the levy will be assessed.

4. Producers will also be required to maintain a record of sales to facilitate the checking of transactions by the officers of the Ministry.

Under this simple form of control, growers, distributors and planters will be enabled substantially to maintain their usual trade connections.

It is intended to introduce the scheme at the same time as the Ware Potato Price Control Plan.

AGRICULTURAL RETURNS ACT (N.I.) 1939.
COLLECTION OF AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS AT
1st JANUARY, 1940.

The Ministry desires again to bring to the notice of all farmers in Northern Ireland that members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary will visit every farmhouse in Northern Ireland during the present month for the purpose of obtaining information regarding the utilisation of land, the area under wheat, the area ploughed, the area under fruit and the area to be harvested as 1st year's hay, the numbers of agricultural machinery, and the numbers of live-stock on their holdings at the 1st January. Farmers will readily appreciate that all information given should be correct, as it is of special importance to the Ministry that the returns should be as accurate as possible.

Under the Agricultural Returns Act recently passed into law it is now made compulsory for farmers to give the information, but the returns can only be used for the purposes set out in the Act that is, in connection with the increase or maintenance of the production of food and other essential articles by means of agriculture, and in particular to facilitate the proper distribution of agricultural machinery, seeds, fertilisers and feeding stuffs. Returns in respect of any individual farm will not be published or disclosed except for these purposes.

Farmers who are absent from home on any day during the first two or three weeks of the present month are requested either to leave for the police enumerator a note of the area under wheat, the area under fruit, and the area actually ploughed at the 1st January, the numbers of agricultural machinery, together with the numbers of live-stock on their holding at the 1st January, or else to leave a note at the nearest Royal Ulster Constabulary barracks.

AGRICULTURAL NOTES.

SEASONAL FARM NOTES.

PLOUGHING.

While in certain districts very good progress has been made with the ploughing of stubble land and lea ground, in others a considerable proportion of the area necessary to comply with the compulsory Tillage Order still remains to be ploughed. In the case of farms where the ploughing is in arrears the most urgent work at this time is the ploughing of land intended for sowing and planting next spring. All farmers are strongly urged to make every endeavour during favourable weather to push ahead with the work of ploughing, so that it may be completed at the earliest possible date. To this end all the resources of the farm as regards power, implements and labour should be utilised now to the fullest possible extent in carrying out the preliminary preparation of the ground for the reception of seed in the spring.

Apart from the fact that land ploughed early in the winter is more easily prepared for sowing than land ploughed in spring, and is also more likely to produce satisfactory crops, early ploughing has the added advantage of leaving the farmer free to concentrate on the necessary tillage work when the sowing season arrives, instead of having to cope with ploughing work as well. It should be the aim of every farmer every year to have the ploughing completed before the main rush of spring work begins, but in a year like the present, when there will be at least 250,000 additional acres of land to sow and plant next spring, the absolute necessity of having all the land ploughed and ready for tillage operations to begin early in spring is clearly apparent.

It is, therefore, obvious that the completion of ploughing as early as possible is in the farmers' own interest. At the same time it is realised that circumstances may exist which prevent the completion of ploughing as early as the farmer would desire. In such cases it is better to plough at a later date than not to plough at all, and quite good crops are likely to be obtained from lea ground ploughed even in March, but it should be remembered that if the ploughing of such land had been done in December or January the prospects of obtaining a good crop would be increased and the work of preparing the land for sowing would be lessened.

Lea land which is ploughed late in the season should be ploughed rather shallower than would be the case if the ploughing had been done early, so as to avoid turning up undesirable "till". The furrows should be thrown well over on their backs. Furrows which are thrown well over cover the grass better, permit of a firm seedbed being prepared, and do not tear up in sods so readily on harrowing as furrows which are set up on their ends.

Every extra acre under crops will be a step in the direction of victory, and so, in the national interest, every farmer should grow as many extra acres of crops as possible; and in their own interests farmers should speed up ploughing operations to the maximum so as to lessen as much as possible the work during the coming months, when the resources of the farm will be taxed to the utmost in coping with the additional work consequent on the Tillage Order, and on the efforts which farmers are making to produce as much food as possible.

CROPS TO GROW.

The choice of crops and the area under each crop will depend on a number of factors which will vary from district to district, and even from farm to farm. The type of soil, the rotation practised, the system of farming, local circumstances such as the presence or absence of a market for a particular crop, and even the particular fancy of the farmer himself will all influence the farmer when deciding what crops and what acreage of each will be grown on his farm. Under present conditions, however, the aim of farmers in general when choosing their crops should be to try to make their farms as self-sufficient as possible as regards supplies of food for stock, so that they will be less dependent on imported feeding stuffs, the supply of which has been greatly reduced since the outbreak of war.

There are two crops which at present are not very widely grown, but which would be most useful on every farm, especially now that supplies of imported foods have been reduced. These are barley and beans.

BARLEY.—With the tremendous increase in the number of pigs in Northern Ireland barley meal has become an increasingly important foodstuff. So far, pig keepers in Northern Ireland have been largely dependent on imported supplies of barley, as well as the other foods fed to pigs. The supply of both maize and barley has been greatly reduced since the outbreak of war, and on this account every farmer having suitable land should grow at least a small acreage of barley this year, as barley meal is one of the most suitable of all foods for pig feeding. In fact, in the absence of maize meal, it would be very difficult to make up a satisfactory pig ration from home-grown foods without barley meal. The pig output of Northern Ireland, besides being an important source of revenue to farmers, is also a great asset to the nation. It is essential to maintain the output of pigs at as high a level as possible, and to do so the area under barley must be considerably increased. An increase of 14 times the area grown in 1939 is the minimum which should be grown in 1940.

Barley is not a difficult crop to grow. It suits a wide variety of soils, but it is essential that the soil be well supplied with lime. Barley will not be a success when grown on sour or acid soils, and the failures experienced by

some farmers have in almost every case been due to lack of lime. Supplies of lime can be obtained at half price under the Land Fertility Scheme.

In experiments carried out by the Ministry yields up to 30 cwt. of grain per statute acre have been obtained. Each acre of a crop giving that yield would produce sufficient barley meal to fatten from 15 to 20 pigs, allowing from 30 to 35 per cent. of barley meal in the ration.

Barley may be grown almost anywhere in the rotation, but the most suitable place is after a root or potato crop. Barley is a good nurse crop if the land is to be sown down to grass. Good crops of barley can also be grown on lea land, or even after another cereal crop. A leaflet on the growing of barley is in course of preparation, and it is hoped that a supply of copies will be available shortly. There is a possibility of supplies of seed barley being short, and farmers who have a supply of barley which would be suitable for seed should not feed this to stock if they can possibly manage without it.

BEANS.—When making up rations for stock from home-grown foods farmers are faced with the problem that the normal foods produced on the farm are all deficient in protein, so that for most classes of stock it is necessary to incorporate a high protein food to form a ration which will be balanced. In the past, supplies of foods rich in protein have practically all been imported, and since the outbreak of war these imports have been considerably reduced. One solution of the problem is to grow a crop which is rich in protein to take the place of the imported high-protein foods, and thus to have a supply of home-grown protein food to balance the home-produced cereals, such as oats and barley. The most suitable crop for this purpose is beans, and it would be well worth every farmer's while to grow a small acreage of that crop, especially if he has a herd of cows. The beans, when ground into meal, are a suitable protein food for incorporating in suitable proportion in the rations for cows, fattening cattle and pigs. Beans can be grown most successfully on the heavier soils, which are well-drained and limed, and the crop may replace roots or potatoes in the rotation.

The farmer who grows barley and beans in conjunction with oats, roots and potatoes may, if he has a large enough area of crops in all, consider himself to be independent of imported feeding stuffs, in that he can make up rations suitable for every type of stock from his home-grown foods alone. If, in addition, he has a supply of separated milk available he need not fear a shortage of protein foods.

OATS.—It is likely that a large proportion of the additional newly-ploughed grassland will be sown with oats this spring and, consequently, much larger supplies of seed oats than usual will be required. There should be ample supplies of oats in the country to meet the demand for seed unless

an abnormal proportion of the crop is fed to stock. With the shortage of imported feeding stuffs, farmers are much more dependent this year on oats for feeding than in previous years. Farmers should, however, be careful to ensure that sufficient oats are retained for seed, and not to depend on obtaining supplies in the market just before sowing time arrives. Any farmer who has to purchase seed oats should place the order as early as possible so as to make sure of getting a supply.

It should be remembered that the Ministry does not supply seed direct to farmers, but the County Agricultural Executive Officer may be able to suggest suitable sources from which seed may be obtained.

POTATOES.—Potatoes should now be selected for seed and boxed, if this work has not already been done. Tubers which have already been boxed should be examined carefully at intervals, and any decaying tubers removed. If all the boxes are not in equally good light it is a good plan to reverse the positions of the boxes occasionally, bringing the boxes which were in the dark into the light and replacing them with the boxes which were in the light. By so doing, all the tubers get an equal share of the light, and the production of good, firm, sturdy sprouts, which will make rapid growth when the seed is planted, is assured.

Under no circumstances should potatoes intended for planting be left in the pit until near planting time, as this leads to the tubers wasting their substance in the production of long, spindly sprouts, which must be broken off before planting. The first sprouts produced by potatoes are the best, but the spindly sprouts, which develop when the tubers are left too long in pits, are useless for producing plants. Furthermore, potatoes in heavily clayed pits generally begin to sweat with the approach of spring, and this rise in temperature in the pit is especially favourable to the fungus which causes "pink rot" disease, with the result that a considerable proportion of the tubers may rot. Again, potato pits left in the field until spring are a cause of delay in ploughing operations. Potatoes should be removed from pits as soon as possible. This will save much inconvenience in spring, and enable the work of ploughing to be proceeded with in good time.

IMPROVEMENT OF PASTURE.

As a result of the increased area which will be under tillage this year the area of grassland in Northern Ireland will be reduced by at least 250,000 acres. On this account, and also to increase food supplies, it is important that all the grassland should be made as productive as possible.

It is still time enough to apply phosphatic manures, such as Semsol, Gafsa Rock phosphate, or Basic Slag, to pasture land; and there are many old pastures which would benefit greatly during the coming grazing season from

a dressing of from 5 to 8 cwt. of one of these manures per statute acre, if it is applied before the end of January. These phosphatic manures act more quickly on soils which are slightly acid, and for that reason lime should be applied the year after, and not before, the phosphatic manures are applied. The lime should be applied at the rate of from 20 to 30 cwt. per statute acre during the autumn or winter following the dressing of phosphates.

A thorough harrowing of the surface of the pasture before applying the manure will be a great help, both by stimulating the growth of new grasses and by removing any "mat" of herbage, thus letting the manures down to the roots of the grass which is the only place where they can produce their good effects.

SEASONAL LIVESTOCK NOTES.

PRESERVATION OF BREEDING STOCK.—So far this winter the feeding of livestock has admittedly been a difficult proposition, due to the comparative shortage of imported feeding stuffs, and many farmers have been forced to dispose of a proportion of their animals. The disposal of some of the stock is the only course open to farmers who cannot get enough feeding stuffs for all the stock on the farm, but this policy needs to be carried out with care and with consideration for the future.

Breeding animals of good quality should not be disposed of, because these will be the foundation stock from which the livestock population will be increased when the feeding stuffs position improves. The necessity for breeding only from the best animals is even greater during wartime than in normal times. It never pays to breed and feed poor quality stock, but it is unpatriotic as well as unprofitable to do so in wartime. All good-quality heifers, dairy cows, breeding sows, young gilts and breeding ewes should be retained if at all possible. If it becomes necessary to dispose of some of the stock disposal should be confined to such animals as beef and store cattle, bacon and store pigs and suckers, and the culls of the breeding stocks. The sheep population should actually be increased where conditions are suitable for the keeping of this class of stock, as sheep are the least dependent of all farm livestock on purchased foods.

HOME-GROWN FOODS.—The numbers of livestock which can be maintained this winter on any farm are roughly in proportion to the amounts of home-grown food available on that farm, and it seems likely that such will also be the case next winter. For this reason it will be in every farmer's interest to grow as many acres of crops as possible. Farmers should not regard the requirements of the Tillage Order as being the limit for tillage, but should in their own interests, and in the interests of the nation, put as much land as possible under the plough. Arable land is much more productive of food than

grassland, and every acre of cereal crops will produce as much food as is equivalent to the total amount of meals required to fatten from 3 to 5 pigs, and every acre of potatoes will produce food equivalent to the amount of meals required for fattening from 8 to 10 pigs.

Many farmers have been complaining about the quality of the emergency rations, but it should be remembered that these rations have been made up according to the Ministry's formulae so that the best use could be made of the feeding stuffs available. By growing as large an area of crops as possible every farmer can make himself less dependent on these purchased rations, and will then be in a position to make up his rations largely from home-produced foods, the quality of which will be definitely known.

ECONOMY IN THE FEEDING OF STOCK.—Under present circumstances, when there is a comparative scarcity of feeding stuffs it is more important than ever that strict economy should be observed in the feeding of livestock. While it is unlikely that farmers under present conditions will feed meals in excess quantities to stock, nevertheless careful attention should be given to the amount of meals fed, as overfeeding is a wasteful practice and, besides, is a common cause of digestive troubles. For fattening cattle finishing at from 10 to 12 cwt. there is nothing to be gained by feeding more than 8 lb. of meals per head daily, while milking cows should receive from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 lb. of a balanced ration for each gallon of milk given, along with a moderate allowance of hay and roots for maintenance. Thus, a cow giving three gallons of milk per day would require about 8 lb. of meal mixture daily. Some farmers feed hay to stock in quantities far in excess of their requirements, with the result that the animals usually eat more hay than they can properly utilise, and what they do not eat is pulled out of the mangers and tramped under foot leaving it fit only for bedding. This practice is obviously wasteful, and waste in any form cannot be afforded, especially under present conditions.

DAIRY COWS.—In most cases dairy farmers have been able to obtain adequate supplies of the emergency dairy ration, but, nevertheless, care should be taken to make the best use of the meals available in conjunction with home-grown foods. The management of a dairy herd offers more opportunities for economy in feeding than does any other class of livestock. Milking cows should be given their meal allowance according to yield, and cows giving under 2 gallons per day will do quite well on a ration of good quality hay and roots. As previously stated, from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 lb. of meal ration per gallon of milk is a suitable allowance of concentrates to feed to the heavier milkers per head daily. A run out once daily is beneficial to the cows, but care should be taken to see that they are not left standing about on a cold bleak day. As soon as the cows come back to the gate after being put out they should be brought in again.

NECESSITY OF WATER.—The cows should be offered water twice daily if automatic drinking bowls are not fitted in the byre. When cows are being watered from buckets it is necessary to give them time to satisfy their thirst. Cows like to sip at the water and will seldom drink all they want at one attempt.

MASTITIS.—The germ causing mastitis or “felon” is one of the dairy farmer’s worst enemies. The infection may be introduced through the teat opening or through cuts or abrasions on the udder or teats, and is spread from affected cows to healthy animals in various ways, such as by the milkers, by flies and by contact with infected bedding. Infection is more likely to spread during winter when the cows are in close contact with each other, being in the house a large proportion of the time. In the case of mastitis, as with many other diseases, prevention is practically the only means of control.

Careful watch should always be kept for signs of mastitis, and immediately any cow is seen to be affected she should be isolated from the herd. If this is not possible she should be milked last and precautions taken to prevent infection spreading, bearing in mind the fact that the milk of an affected animal contains the germs which cause the disease. The practice of drawing the first streams of milk on to the floor of the byre cannot to be too strongly condemned, since, if there is an affected cow in the byre, this is a sure means of spreading the infection. Another practice which should never be allowed in any byre is that of wet milking, because, apart from making the production of clean milk impossible, this practice, by keeping the teat round the opening in a continual wet raw condition, makes conditions favourable for the entry of the germ which causes mastitis. Milkers should always wash their hands thoroughly after milking one cow and before starting to milk another.

LICE ON CATTLE.—Lice may be found on all housed cattle during the winter months, and cattle which are infested with them are generally restless and not in a state to give maximum production, whether this be beef or milk. Fattening cattle are frequently affected with lice and require special attention if the beasts are to thrive properly.

Housed animals should be examined frequently, and if lice are found to be present steps should be taken immediately to destroy the pests. Lice may be destroyed by applying a wash prepared from Jeyes’ Fluid (1 part of Jeyes’ Fluid in 20 parts water), or from any of the derris root preparations recommended for the destruction of the Ox-Warble fly maggots. A list of these preparations will be found in Circular No. 13, copies of which may be had from the Ministry on request. A second dressing will be necessary in from 10 to 12 days after the first to destroy lice which have hatched in the meantime from eggs present at the time of the first dressing. The dressings will not destroy the eggs.

Thorough grooming at frequent intervals is very beneficial to beef cattle, especially those tied in stalls, as this removes scurf and itch from the skin, helps to prevent infestation by lice, increases circulation and in every way makes the animals more contented. No farmer needs to be told that the contented animal is making the best thrive.

BREEDING EWES.—The breeding flock should receive careful attention from now onwards, especially where early lambs are expected. The allowance of meals given to breeding ewes will have to be reduced this winter, and on most farms hand-feeding should not be given until shortly before lambing, and it may not be necessary at all if good fresh grass is available. During periods of severe frost or snow a small allowance of good hay should be given to the ewes, and one turnip per head daily will help to keep them in good condition. Roots should never be fed in large quantities to pregnant ewes, and in general swedes are preferable to mangels. Frosted roots should not be fed. The ewes should be given exercise daily if inclined to be lazy, by driving them from one field to another. This will help to prevent losses from pregnancy disease.

EARLY LAMBING.—Great care is necessary with ewes which are due to lamb at this season of the year, if losses among the young lambs are to be reduced to a minimum. At this time of year the weather is generally unfavourable, and probably no animal has less resistance to a bleak night than a newly-born lamb. Ewes which are known to be near lambing should be put into a shed or open house at night, and the flock should be seen last thing at night and first thing in the morning.

If a lamb should be found apparently lifeless it may often be brought round by placing it in a vessel of warm water, or by drying thoroughly and rolling in warm blankets near a fire. A teaspoonful of whiskey, if available, is also useful for reviving a weak lamb.

When sheep lamb in the house, or when assistance is necessary during lambing, the navel of each lamb should be disinfected with a mild disinfectant such as tincture of iodine. Also, after lambing any loose wool should be removed from each ewe's udder and flanks.

EARLY GRASS.—Hand-feeding of the suckling ewes is necessary until the grass comes, and the ewes and lambs should be put to fresh pasture after lambing. This will help to prevent the lambs from becoming infested with worms. A further fresh field should be reserved to provide early grass for the flock and, if necessary, a dressing of sulphate of ammonia should be given in mid-February to promote an early "bite" for the ewes and lambs.

This practice will help to reduce the amount of hand-feeding necessary, which is a very important consideration this year.

Further information on the care and management of sheep will be found in Leaflet No. 47, copies of which may be had from the Ministry, on request.

SEASONAL GARDEN AND ORCHARD NOTES.

SPRAYING EQUIPMENT.—The spraying equipment, including guns, lances and hoses should be thoroughly examined, and any defective parts renewed. Neglect to do this now may result in a break-down when spraying is in progress, involving not only a delay but possibly a loss of an opportunity of completing this very important work under the best conditions, and a subsequent reduction in the value of the crop. Arrangements should also be made now for obtaining supplies of spraying materials, if not already on hand, and an adequate supply of water, so that there may be no unnecessary delay once spraying has begun.

PLANTING, PRUNING, AND SPRAYING.—The planting of fruit trees and bushes should be completed as soon as possible, and advantage taken of every favourable opportunity to finish the work of pruning. Should favourable weather for spraying fruit trees with tar-oil washes, however, prevail, spraying should be given precedence over pruning and the spraying carried out, even though pruning has not been completed. Spraying with tar-oil washes should not be done during showery weather, and, during frosty periods the work should cease each day in time for the wash on the trees to dry before the temperature falls to freezing point. Tar-oil washes should be stored in frost-proof buildings. The pumps, hoses, etc., should be emptied of spray material when the work is finished each day.

SHALLOTS AND POTATO ONIONS.—If the ground in the vegetable garden has been dug or trenched in the late autumn or early winter, it is usually possible in most areas to get it sufficiently dry towards the end of January to permit of the planting of shallots and potato onions. These crops succeed best in a generously manured and deeply worked soil. The bulbs should be planted by being pressed into the soil until only the tips are left showing. They should be arranged in rows about 14 inches apart, allowing 6 inches between the bulbs in the rows in the case of shallots and about 9 inches in the case of potato onions.

CARROTS, ETC.—The heaps of stored roots should be examined, and any sprouting tops removed. Quantities of parsnips should be lifted and stored during mild weather, so that a supply will be available for use when the ground is frozen or covered with snow.

SEED POTATOES.—The supply of seed potatoes should be carefully examined and any decaying tubers removed. See that the store is sufficiently frost proof to protect the tubers from damage. If there are any “greenflies” present on the tubers the store should be fumigated with a good insecticide. It is important that seed potatoes should be kept free of these insects, as they are chiefly responsible for infecting healthy tubers with certain virus diseases.

GENERAL.—Every effort should be made to get all vacant ground in the garden dug as soon as possible. Ground dug even now, and left exposed to the action of the air, frost, etc., will be considerably benefited. Manure may be dug in as the work proceeds.

COMPOSTS.

The scarcity of farmyard manure during recent years has led to a widespread search for a suitable substitute to supply the humus which is so necessary for the production of good crops. This has resulted in the discovery of methods of breaking down rapidly such organic materials as straw; grass, including lawn mowings; tree leaves; potato stalks; pea haulm, etc. Of these materials fresh grass is probably the best on account of its nitrogen content, and, where available it should be mixed with the other less nitrogenous materials which are going into the compost heap.

The materials to be rotted down should be heaped in layers about 9 inches deep, and each layer sprinkled with some nitrogenous fertiliser such as sulphate of ammonia or nitro chalk at the rate of about 1lb. per square yard. Usually from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 cwt. of sulphate of ammonia is sufficient to treat one ton of refuse. As the work of making the heap proceeds, the material should be watered so that it is made moist but not wet. The heap must be made compact and be turned every three or four weeks, placing the outside material in the centre of the new heap. If the material appears dry when being turned it should be moistened. In cases where sulphate of ammonia has been used a little lime should be scattered over the top of the heap when completed. Decay is hastened by finally watering the heap with a solution of permanganate of potash made by dissolving $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. permanganate in one gallon of water and applying the solution at the rate of 6 gallons per cubic yard of material.

Another method of breaking down waste rubbish consists in forming heaps of alternate layers of rubbish about 4 inches deep and farm manure about 2 inches deep, together with a dressing of chalk, or soil containing lime. The heap in this case is made up loosely so that air has ready access, and it is kept moist all the time. The heap should not exceed 4 feet in height when first made up, and it should be turned at the end of about one month. This turning should be repeated at the end of another four or five weeks.

The manurial value of composts may not be as high as that of good farm-yard manure, but the humus content of these composted materials is high, and this is of great assistance in maintaining the soil in a healthy and productive state. These composts may be applied liberally, especially if the soil is low in humus, when a much heavier dressing than would be given of farm-yard manure should be applied.

No attempt should be made to break down woody material such as prunings of trees and shrubs, raspberry canes, cabbage stalks, etc., nor should any diseased material be included in the compost heap. These should be burned and the ashes spread over the soil after it has been dug.

The shortage of manurial elements can be made good by the use of

1½ oz. superphosphate,

½ oz. sulphate or muriate of potash,

½ oz. sulphate of ammonia, or nitro-chalk, per square yard of ground, applied when the ground is being prepared for sowing or planting.

GLASSHOUSES IN WAR TIME.

HEATED GLASSHOUSES.

TOMATOES.—Owners of glasshouses, equipped with heating apparatus, will be in a position to commence seed sowing early in the New Year. A small sowing of tomato seeds should then be made in boxes measuring approximately 14" x 8½" x 2½". The soil recommended consists of a mixture of the following:—

2 parts by bulk good loam,

2 parts by bulk leaf soil (or 1 part peat moss),

1 part by bulk coarse sand.

To each bushel of this compost should be added 1½ ounces superphosphate and a little lime. The compost should then be passed through a half-inch mesh sieve. If there is any risk of disease germs being present the soil and boxes should be sterilized. Where large quantities of soil have to be treated sterilising is best accomplished by high pressure steaming. This, however, involves the use of a boiler capable of maintaining a minimum pressure of 40 lb. per square inch, and other equipment. The soil to be treated is placed to a depth of 12 inches in a wide shallow metal bin. Steam is then turned on full until all the soil is at a temperature of 212°F. The steam is then turned off and the soil is left undisturbed for a further ten minutes.

Small quantities of soil may be treated by suspending it in coarse sacking over several inches of boiling water in a domestic copper for 30 or 40 minutes.

Alternatively the soil can be placed in a metal container with a finely perforated bottom. The container should be made to fit tightly over a trough of water heated from below. The container should be relatively shallow and of large area. One hour's steaming is usually sufficient, using equipment of this kind. Proprietary apparatus for sterilizing soil by low pressure steam is on the market.

Soil to be sterilized should be broken up or sifted so that there are no lumps larger than 1 inch in diameter; it should also be dry. Loam and sand should be treated together, and the leaf soil treated separately by itself. Peat moss usually does not require to be sterilized. The mixed composts should never be sterilized. Lime should not be added before sterilizing, and limey soils should not be used in the composts. After sterilization has been completed the loam is passed through a half inch mesh sieve, the different compost ingredients mixed together, and the superphosphate and lime added. The addition of the fertilizers is particularly important with sterilized soil.

Where the necessary equipment for steaming is not available, sterilization can be accomplished by the use of formalin. In this case the mixed compost should be treated before the addition of the superphosphate and lime. The soil and boxes should be thoroughly wetted with a solution of formalin, using one part by volume of ordinary commercial formalin in 49 parts of water. The treated soil should be heaped up and covered for a couple of days with clean sacks, or a tarpaulin. Afterwards, the soil should be spread out and turned several times to help it to dry out and to assist the fumes of the formalin to escape. When the soil has dried sufficiently, and all traces of the formalin fumes have disappeared (which is usually at the end of about three weeks) it may be placed in the boxes and the seed sown.

A layer of coarse material should first be placed in the bottom of the boxes for drainage, and the boxes then almost filled with the compost making it moderately firm and level. The tomato seeds should be sown thinly, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ " apart and covered about $\frac{1}{4}$ " deep. Sheets of glass covered with paper should then be placed over the boxes and the latter placed in a temperature of 60°F . As soon as germination has taken place the glass and paper should be removed and the boxes placed close to the glass so as to encourage sturdy growth of the seedlings. When the seedlings have made two pairs of rough leaves they should be potted up into size 60 pots. The soil for the pots should be similar to that used in the seed boxes, but having an addition of bone flour at the rate of 1 lb. bone flour to 100 lb. of soil. The soil for potting should be placed in the house some days before being required for use so that it may be warmed up to the temperature of that in which the young plants are growing.

An alternative method of sowing tomato seeds consists of sowing approximately 200 seeds in each box. The seedlings are then pricked off $1\frac{1}{2}$ " apart

into other boxes as soon as the first pair of rough leaves appears. When the seedlings are about $1\frac{1}{2}$ " to 2" high and two pairs of rough leaves are showing they are transferred to the pots. By this method a saving of space is achieved for two or three weeks with a resultant saving in fuel, but healthier and better plants are generally produced by the former method.

LETTUCE.—A sowing of lettuce seed of the variety Cheshunt Early Giant may also be made in January. The seed should be sown thinly and lightly covered. If the boxes are placed in a temperature of 60°F. germination will take place in two or three days. As soon as germination has been completed the boxes of seedlings should be removed to a cooler house and kept near to the glass in order to encourage sturdy growth. Towards the end of January the seedlings can be planted out in houses in which the soil has been prepared for tomatoes. Spaces should be left for the tomato plants. The temperature of the houses should be maintained at from 50 to 55°F. until it is necessary to warm up the soil for tomatoes. In this way the lettuce crop will be cut before it begins to interfere unduly with the tomato plants.

ONIONS AND CAULIFLOWER.—From the middle to the end of January seed of onions, cabbage, Brussels sprouts and cauliflower may be sown in boxes in houses artificially heated. For cauliflower and cabbage, soil similar to that recommended for tomatoes will suffice, but for onions a mixture containing a little well-rotted farmyard manure is generally preferred. Onion plants produced from seed sown in heat early in the year and subsequently hardened off and planted out in the open in April generally escape attacks of onion fly, and usually produce a much better crop than plants raised from seed sown in the open in March. Ailsa Craig, Cranston's Excelsior and Rousham Park Hero are popular varieties. The cauliflower seedlings should be pricked off into other boxes and afterwards gradually hardened off for planting out in the open in warm sheltered positions, during March. The varieties Pioneer and Early London cauliflower are suitable for this work.

UNHEATED GLASSHOUSES.

Owners of glasshouses which are not provided with heating apparatus should not attempt the raising of early tomato plants in such houses. Seeds of lettuce, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts, however, may be sown in boxes in January, for although their germination and the subsequent growth of the seedlings will be slower than would be the case if heat were provided, the plants so raised will be suitable for planting out early in sheltered areas, and will provide early crops. Suitable varieties of lettuce for this purpose are May Queen and Feltham King, and of cauliflower the varieties Pioneer and Early London.

Early varieties of peas may also be sown in cold glass houses during January. There are several methods used. A very popular one is to lay a number of sods each measuring approximately 10 inches long, 4 inches wide and 2 inches deep, grass side down close together on boards or sheets of corrugated iron. A V-shaped groove about 1 inch deep is cut down the centre of each upturned sod. The peas are sown in the grooves, and the sods are then covered with soil to a depth of from $1\frac{1}{2}$ " to 2 inches. Another method involves the use of V-shaped wooden troughs formed of two boards and two end pieces, while another makes use of old disused gutter piping. When it becomes necessary to harden off the plants prior to planting out they can be removed out of doors without root disturbance, while the actual transplanting in the open ground can also be accomplished with little disturbance or check to growth.

Houses already planted with lettuce should be carefully ventilated with the object of maintaining a buoyant atmosphere. A stagnant, damp atmosphere, is ruinous to lettuce plants. A regular periodic inspection should be made and all leaves beginning to decay should be removed and burned. In houses capable of being heated, a little heat may be provided towards the end of January, but no attempt at forcing should be made, especially during dull weather. An average temperature of 55°F . is best.

HOT-BED FRAMES.—Where a supply of fresh horse manure is obtainable hot-beds may be used as a source of heat. As the manure is collected it should be mixed with an equal bulk of old leaves or old decayed manure. The mixture may be stored either under cover or in the open, but if in the open it should be made into a rounded heap brought to a point to throw off the rain. Each subsequent supply of fresh manure, after having been mixed with old leaves or manure, should be incorporated in the heap, the heap being turned so that the material on the outside is brought inside. When enough material has been collected the heap should be turned at least three times at intervals of 3 or 4 days. After the final turning the bed can be prepared. It should be made from 18 to 20 inches wider than the frame to be used. The fermenting material should be placed in layers 8 to 9 inches deep, and each layer firmed by treading. This firming ensures that the heat is produced more slowly but over a longer period than if the material were piled up loosely. When the frame is placed in position more of the manure should be packed outside it. The lights should then be placed on the frame, but they should be raised a few inches at the top for a few days after the completion of the bed to allow steam and noxious gases to escape. Such a hot-bed is suitable for raising plants of the kinds already suggested for sowing in heated glasshouses. The boxes in which the seeds are sown should be plunged in the fermenting material.

Early supplies of carrots may also be produced on such hot-beds. In this case sandy soil containing a good supply of well-decayed vegetable mould is placed on the fermenting material inside the frame to a depth of from 6 to 8 inches and made moderately firm. When the temperature of the bed is beginning to decline, the carrot seed should be sown broadcast on the soil and lightly covered. Amsterdam Forcing and Primo are suitable varieties for early forcing.

Hot-beds should be made where possible in sheltered but unshaded positions. Protection from cold northerly and easterly winds is desirable, but the frames should face an open south, so that the plants may receive all the light possible during the short days in the early part of the year.

At night, during frosty weather, the lights should be covered with straw or old sacks to afford the plants additional protection.

SEASONAL POULTRY-KEEPING NOTES.

Poultry keepers generally have experienced a rather difficult time since the outbreak of war, due to the comparative scarcity of imported feeding stuffs. Just as in the case of the livestock farmer, every poultry keeper should, in the coming year, produce as much home-grown food as possible in order to safeguard his own position. If the acreage of the farm is small, then an attempt should be made to rent land for ploughing on the conacre or eleven months' system, as the number of birds which can be kept in 1941 will be largely in proportion to the amount of food which will be produced at home. One acre of oats will provide all the grain required for about 50 hens for one year.

CULLING OF BREEDING STOCK AND PULLETS.—On many poultry farms it is necessary to reduce the numbers of birds, but every effort should be made to retain the best breeding birds. Reduction should take the form of a rigorous culling out of all birds which are not of a good standard of quality, type and productiveness. Any breeding birds showing signs of lack of vigour, or otherwise deficient, should be disposed of and only the birds of good constitution, type and quality retained. This culling in many cases, will account for anything up to 40 out of every 100 birds, but it is far better to retain even half of the existing stock, if specially picked specimens, than to try and maintain the entire flock on short rations.

Under present circumstances food cannot be wasted on birds which are not "pulling their weight" in the flock. All pullets and hens which are showing any signs of not being profitable should be culled out and disposed of without delay. The remaining profitable birds, although fewer in number, will bring

in a greater net return and, naturally, the food consumption will be much less. It is unpatriotic to waste food on bad birds, and none but the best should be retained.

FEEDING OF POULTRY.—This subject is dealt with in an article which appeared in the Monthly Report for December, 1939, entitled "Poultry in War-time". Poultry keepers should read this article if they have not already done so. Reprints of the article in leaflet form will be available for distribution, free of charge, in the near future.

INFERTILITY IN WHITE WYANDOTTES.—Many complaints of excessive infertility in eggs of this breed are received. This is a peculiarity of the breed according to some authorities, but there is evidence that part at least of it is due to wrong management on the part of the poultry keeper. The White Wyandotte hen is very prone to lay on internal fat without giving the impression that she is over fat. When this happens the fertility of her eggs is bound to be reduced. The birds are placid and good feeders, and if breeding hens are fed too generously, especially if they are in runs, they will become too fat internally and, while continuing to lay well, will give few fertile eggs.

All breeding birds should be run on free range and fed on plain food with a large proportion of oats. Very good fertility has been obtained from White Wyandotte hens fed on practically all oats. While such feeding will not induce full egg production it will encourage good fertility; it is better in breeding stock to have good fertility from a smaller number of eggs than poor fertility from a larger number. The waste of incubator space, oil, time, etc., occasioned in hatching infertile eggs must be prevented if at all possible.

Infertility may also be due to overmating and to the use of males of poor vigour. It is probable that overmating is oftener a contributory cause than undermating. Better fertility will likely be obtained when from 15 to 20 hens are mated with one vigorous male than when only half those numbers are mated with one cockerel.

HATCHING.—In normal times hatching operations would be in full swing at this time of year, but this year poultry keepers have found difficulty in making up their minds as to the scale on which hatching operations should be carried on.

Limited supplies of a chick-rearing mash are available, and it is advised that chickens should be hatched in moderation from now until the end of March, but that special care be taken to see that none but those which are likely to be thrifty and profitable shall be reared. It is of particular importance to hatch eggs only from good, healthy and productive stock, not to hatch from pullets and, if the farm is a breeding one, to hatch only pure bred chicks so as to obtain birds to replenish the breeding stock in future. In

fact under present conditions it would seem to be a sound policy for all poultry keepers to hatch nothing but pure bred chicks so as to preserve the foundation stock.

Cockerel chickens should be disposed of at as early an age as they can be recognised and the food used solely for the pullets.

For the present the hatching of chickens for sale as table birds should not be done.

IMPORTANCE OF HYGIENE.—In chicken rearing the importance of hygiene cannot be over-estimated. Many of the diseases and ailments affecting chickens during the rearing stages do not lend themselves readily to treatment, and it is only by the adoption of suitable preventive methods, involving strict cleanliness and disinfection, that the ravages of such outbreaks can be avoided.

As a general rule second-hand poultry appliances should never be purchased unless it is definitely known that they have been used only on a farm which is and has been completely free from disease. Outbreaks of disease on many poultry farms have been traced to second-hand incubators, brooders, etc., which were brought from farms infected with disease. Apart from the risk of introducing disease there is also the risk that second-hand appliances are being sold because they have been found to be inefficient and unsatisfactory, or because they have been damaged in some way.

DISINFECTION OF INCUBATORS.—Incubators should receive particular attention as regards cleaning and disinfection, and it is a wise plan to clean and disinfect each machine both before and after each hatch. It is important to have the incubator thoroughly clean before disinfecting it, as the presence of dirt in corners may protect germs from the disinfectant. The felts should be removed, and the trays well scrubbed with a solution of washing soda in hot water and afterwards washed with a reliable disinfectant solution at the strength recommended by the makers. After disinfection, when the felts and trays have been replaced, the incubator should be fumigated as an additional precaution. The fumigation of incubators is described on page 5 of leaflet No. 59, copies of which may be had from the Ministry on request. If the felts have got hard and their porosity impaired, new ones should be obtained.

Hovers and brooders should also be cleaned and disinfected in a similar manner to incubators. The curtains of hovers should be steamed in an ordinary oven for an hour or two.

HOUSING CONDITIONS.—In artificial rearing the requirements of a good house for the chickens are adequate space, good lighting arrangements, opening windows or shutters which will permit of direct sunlight reaching the floor and good ventilation without draughts.

It is important that the chickens should not be overcrowded, and about one square foot of floor space is required in rearing houses for every two chickens. Again, chickens which are reared indoors for the first few weeks may develop "cramp" or leg-weakness if direct light is not admitted to the house. It should be understood that light which passes through ordinary glass is robbed of its vital health-giving rays. Windows or shutters must be arranged in such a way that they can be opened when weather conditions are favourable, so that light passes directly to the floor of the house. The chickens should have direct light for at least two hours each day.

Before the flock is put into the house, the house should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, and throughout the rearing period the house and litter must be kept dry and clean. It is also essential that all drinking vessels, troughs and dry mash hoppers should be kept scrupulously clean. Under present conditions the rearing of chickens out of doors is recommended.

FRESH REARING GROUND.—It is very important that the chicks should be put on to clean, fresh ground, as this is the only way of preventing attacks of parasitic diseases such as coccidiosis, gapes and worms. This will be appreciated when it is remembered that chicks when hatched from the eggs are free from infestation by these parasites, and that such infection is obtained by picking over floors or runs contaminated with poultry droppings. These parasites can live up to two years in the ground.

Chicks should not be put on to the same ground as adult fowl because adult birds, although showing no symptoms, are frequently affected with these parasites and would contaminate clean ground by passing out the eggs of the parasites in their droppings.

If poultry could be introduced as a "crop" in the rotation of the farm little trouble would be experienced from parasites. This might be carried out on general farms using ground coming into use after a crop rotation for rearing purposes each year.

INSECT PESTS.—Lice are seldom found on artificially reared chickens, but are often present on birds reared with hens. When lice are present on chickens they may be destroyed by treating them with dilute mercurial ointment used sparingly, or with pyrethrum powder. It is not recommended to use sodium fluoride on very young chickens.

If red mite is found to be present the inside of the house and fittings should be thoroughly cleaned and then painted with paraffin oil. Creosote is also effective, and may be applied to the perches and interior of the house. When any strong smelling substance, such as paraffin or creosote, is used in the interior of a chicken house the chickens should not be admitted to the house until it has been thoroughly aired and the fumes have disappeared.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REMINDERS.

GENERAL.

PLOUGHING-UP SUBSIDY.—Farmers who have applied for the subsidy of £2 per acre in respect of old grassland which is to be ploughed, are reminded that payment of the subsidy is now being made. Payments cannot be made, however, until the land has been ploughed, but as the Ministry is anxious to dispatch the money at the earliest possible date any farmer who has the ploughing completed should notify the Ministry immediately. Farmers should, therefore, push ahead with the ploughing, and tell the Ministry when it has been done. The sooner the ploughing is done the sooner will the subsidy be paid.

AGRICULTURAL EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND DISTRICT TILLAGE OFFICERS.—A list giving the names and addresses of the County Agricultural Executive Officers and District Tillage Officers will be found on page 569 of this report.

LICENSING OF BOARS.—In future, applications for licences for boars should be made when the animals reach four months old, irrespective of the particular quarter of the year in which they were farrowed. Application forms may be obtained from any Police Barracks, from the County Agricultural Executive Officer, or directly from the Ministry. Farmers keeping unlicensed boars are liable to prosecution.

COUNTY POULTRY STATIONS.—Lists giving the names and addresses of holders of hen, duck, goose and turkey stations for the present hatching season can be obtained free, on request, from the County Agricultural Executive Officer, or from the local Poultry Instructor.

ACCREDITED POULTRY FARMS.—Lists giving the names and addresses of owners of Accredited Poultry Farms for the 1940 season may be obtained free, on request, from the Ministry, the County Agricultural Executive Officer, or the local Poultry Instructor.

LAND FERTILITY SCHEME.—Farmers should take advantage of the Land Fertility Scheme, which is still in operation. Under this scheme lime for application to land may be obtained at half the normal cost provided that not less than 2 tons are purchased and applied. Particulars regarding the types and methods of application of lime are given in the Ministry's leaflet, "Lime and Liming", copies of which may be had free, on request.

SEED SUPPLIES.—Farmers are advised to order their requirements of seeds early to make sure of getting the necessary supplies. The Ministry does not supply seed direct to farmers, but farmers having difficulty in obtaining seed should communicate with the County Agricultural Executive Officer, who will advise regarding the most suitable varieties and probable sources from which seed might be obtained.

SEED POTATOES.—Lists giving the names and addresses of growers of pure and healthy stocks can be obtained from the Ministry, free, on request. Farmers are advised to plant only seed from crops which have been certified pure and healthy by the Ministry.

LEAFLETS.—A list of the Ministry's leaflets is given on the last page of this report. Copies of any of these leaflets can be had, free of charge, from the Ministry on request. A leaflet on "The Cultivation and Harvesting of Flax", intended to be of assistance to those who have little or no experience of flax growing, has been prepared, and copies are now available for distribution. This is Leaflet No. 94. A leaflet on barley growing is in course of preparation, and it is hoped that a supply of copies will be available at an early date. A leaflet on the growing of field beans is also being prepared.

COUNTY AGRICULTURAL EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND DISTRICT TILLAGE OFFICERS.

Under the re-organisation consequent on the outbreak of war and the campaign to obtain increased tillage and more food from home farms, the staffs of County Committees of Agriculture have been taken over by the Ministry, reinforced by additional officers and new districts arranged. In each County there is a County Agricultural Executive Officer who is responsible to the County Committee of Agriculture and the Ministry for the work of the officers in the County. The designation Secretary or Agricultural Organiser is now replaced by that of County Agricultural Executive Officer.

The Agricultural Instructors and Agricultural Overseers are now designated District Tillage Officers and, generally speaking, each has an area comprising a Rural District. The Horticultural Instructors and Poultry Instructors retain their original districts and continue with their usual work which, of course, is also changed in character to a certain extent, they, too, being concerned with the general effort to increase food and, in their respective spheres, being responsible for furthering the campaign and advising in relation to the conditions arising from the war.

The names and addresses of the County Executive Officers and of the District Tillage Officers follow.

ANTRIM.

County Agricultural Executive Officer :—T. Robinson, County Courthouse, Crumlin Road, Belfast. (Broadway, Ballymena, after 1st February).

District Tillage Officers and Districts :—

Name and Address.	Rural District in which working.
P. T. O'Hare, 188 Limestone Road, Belfast	Lisburn and Belfast
K. M. Campbell, c/o. Mrs. Canavan, Church Street, Antrim	Antrim
J. H. Boyd, Bridge End, Carnlough, Larne	Larne
D. M. Campbell, 20 Broughshane Street, Ballymena	Ballymena
J. M'Dowell, Brookhall, Cloyfin	Ballymoney
P. M'Hugh, Whitehouse, Knocknacarry, Cushendun	Ballycastle

ARMAGH.

County Agricultural Executive Officer :—J. Algie, 4 Russell Street, Armagh.

District Tillage Officers and Districts :—

Name and Address	Rural District in which working
J. C. Patterson, Grantham Villas, Victoria Street, Armagh	Armagh (North)
W. M. Shilliday, Dunlague House, Keady	Armagh (South)
J. Graham, c/o. Mrs. D. Hoy, Hillview, Lisnisky, Portadown	Lurgan and Tanderagee
M. J. Turley, 29 Queen Street, Newry	Newry No. 2

DOWN.

County Agricultural Executive Officer :—G. L. McKelvey, 78 May Street, Belfast.

District Tillage Officers and Districts :—

Name and Address	Rural District in which working
J. T. Kernohan, 6 Movilla Street, Newtownards	Newtownards and Castlereagh
W. R. M. Boyd, Duniris, Moira Road, Lisburn	Hillsborough and Moira
R. F. Small, Denver's Hotel, Downpatrick	Downpatrick
J. Gillespie, White Star Hotel, Newry Street, Banbridge	Banbridge
V. Boyce, Cross, Rathfriland	Newry No. 1
J. G. Jamison, Shimna Road, Newcastle (Wednesday and Thursday of each week—Ardkeen, Newcastle Road, Kilkeel).	Kilkeel

FERMANAGH.

County Agricultural Executive Officer:—W. T. McClintock, Courthouse, Enniskillen.

District Tillage Officers and Districts:—

Name and Address	Rural District in which working
H. S. Flack, Ederney Lodge, Ederney	Irvinestown
T. Moore, "Innisfree," Old Rossory, Enniskillen	Enniskillen
D. T. Ritchie, Jamestown, Ballinamallard	Enniskillen
T. C. Skelly, Mountpleasant, Lisnaskea	Lisnaskea

LONDONDERRY.

County Agricultural Executive Officer:—T. K. Caldwell, Courthouse, Coleraine.

District Tillage Officers and Districts:—

Name and Address	Rural District in which working
T. H. Lowe, Hillhead, Castledawson	Magherafelt (South)
A. L. M'Mullan, c/o. Winton's, Main Street, Maghera	Magherafelt (North)
G. Pollock, Lower Main Street, Garvagh	Coleraine
E. D. Graham, 39 Catharine Street, Limavady	Limavady
A. J. M'Farland, Killycorr, Straidarran	Londonderry

TYRONE.

County Agricultural Executive Officers:—W. J. Patterson, Courthouse, Omagh, and W. Walsh, Courthouse, Omagh.

District Tillage Officers and Districts:—

Name and Address	Rural District in which working
R. Bell, Cluain Fois, Melmount, Strabane	Strabane
J. J. M'Ferran, Upper Strabane Road, Castlederg	Castlederg
J. M. Flanagan, Glenmacoff, Drumlea, Omagh	Omagh N.E.
E. S. Daly, Coneywarren, Omagh	Omagh S.W.
W. J. Martin, Main Street, Clogher	Clogher
D. C. Gamble, The Retreat, Coalisland	Dungannon
P. Dolan, George Hotel, Molesworth Street, Cookstown	Cookstown

AGRICULTURAL INDEX NUMBERS.

MONTHLY INDEX NUMBERS OF PRICES OF INDIVIDUAL COMMODITIES.

(Corrected for Seasonal Variation).

(Base 1927-29 = 100).

Commodity	1939				1938	1937
	December	November	October	September	December	December
Cattle : Fat ...	88	92	92	87	75	95
Store ...	98	95	98	95	91	93
Cows : Fat ...	78	76	82	69	60	71
Sheep and Lambs :						
Fat ...	64	58	69	66	52	58
Bacon Pigs ...	*	*	*	84	90	97
Hens and Chickens	78	74	70	71	80	81
Ducks ...	92	90	98	91	98	95
Turkeys ...	77	83	—	—	63	58
Eggs ...	100	103	93	108	79	95
Milk :						
For Manufacture	*	101	97	93	88	94
Whole ...	129	125	120	109	105	102
All ...	*	111	104	98	97	98
Farmers' Butter	89	88	87	87	75	90
Potatoes ...	124	98	103	101	79	77
Oats ...	203	126	112	83	74	93
Hay ...	136	127	128	107	77	85
Oat Straw ...	134	123	112	86	87	93
Flax ...	109	108	—	—	75	75
Grass Seed :						
Perennial ...	135	89	102	99	121	55
Italian ...	224	136	127	102	110	38
Mixed ...	185	142	131	99	100	46
All ...	162	127	118	97	128	51

Revised Index Numbers taking Account of Payments under the Cattle Subsidy, and Government Payments for Milk.

Cattle : Fat ...	101	105	106	100	88	107
Milk :						
For Manufacture	*	131	122	111	107	106
All ...	*	129	122	111	106	104

* Not yet available.

MONTHLY INDEX NUMBERS OF PRICES OF INDIVIDUAL COMMODITIES.
 (Uncorrected for Seasonal Variation).
 (Base 1927-29 = 100).

Commodity	1939				1938	1937
	December	November	October	September	December	December
Cattle : Fat ...	87	83	82	82	74	92
Store ...	94	92	96	95	87	90
Cows : Fat ...	76	70	76	65	59	69
Sheep and Lambs : Fat ...	58	54	61	59	48	54
Bacon Pigs ...	*	*	*	81	82	86
Hens and Chickens	83	69	65	66	84	85
Ducks ...	102	88	96	88	109	107
Turkeys ...	112	94	—	—	93	91
Eggs ...	137	173	135	122	111	136
Milk :						
For Manufacture	*	107	97	88	99	105
Whole ...	146	131	121	104	121	121
All ...	*	117	104	92	111	114
Farmers' Butter ...	93	92	86	83	78	93
Potatoes ...	124	93	101	104	79	75
Oats ...	188	116	100	79	69	86
Hay ...	132	123	124	103	75	82
Oat Straw ...	133	122	110	88	87	92
Flax ...	113	111	—	—	77	81
Grass Seed :						
Perennial ...	144	93	102	93	121	56
Italian ...	223	141	124	83	101	36
Mixed ...	185	140	127	97	93	44
All ...	170	131	114	90	123	49

Revised Index Numbers taking Account of Payments under the Cattle
 Subsidy, and Government Payments for Milk.

Cattle : Fat ...	99	95	95	94	87	104
Milk :						
For Manufacture	*	139	122	105	121	119
All ...	*	136	121	104	121	120

* Not yet available.

PRICES USED IN THE CALCULATION OF THE INDEX NUMBERS.

Commodity	1927-29	1939				1938	1937
		Dec.	Nov.	Oct.	Sept.	Dec.	Dec.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Cattle :							
Fat, per live cwt. ...	45 2	39 4	37 5	37 3	36 11	33 4	41 6
Store, per head	223 7	210 1	204 6	214 1	211 10	195 7	201 8
Cows :							
Fat, per head	336 10	255 9	237 0	256 3	219 3	199 4	233 8
Sheep & Lambs :							
Fat, per head	53 6	31 1	28 8	32 5	31 9	25 10	28 9
Bacon Pigs :							
per dead cwt.	78 8	*	*	*	63 5	64 7	68 0
Hens & Chickens :							
per head	3 0½	2 6½	2 1½	1 11½	2 0½	2 6½	2 7½
Ducks, per head	2 6½	2 7½	2 3	2 5½	2 3	2 9½	2 8½
Turkeys, per head	15 7½	17 6½	14 8½	—	—	14 7½	14 3½
Eggs, per 120	13 6	18 6	23 3	18 2	16 6	14 11	18 4
Milk :							
For Manufacture, per gal.	0 6½	*	0 6½	0 6	0 5½	0 6½	0 6½
Whole, per gal.	1 0	1 5½	1 3½	1 2½	1 0½	1 2½	1 2½
Farmers' Butter, per lb.	1 5½	1 4½	1 4	1 3	1 2½	1 1½	1 4½
Potatoes, per cwt.	3 5	4 2	3 2	3 5	3 6	2 8	2 6
Oats, per cwt.	8 1	15 2	9 5	8 1	6 5	5 7	7 0
Hay, per ton	73 8	97 1	90 6	91 1	76 1	54 11	60 3
Oat Straw :							
per ton	47 6	63 3	57 9	52 3	41 10	41 4	43 9
Flax, per stone	12 3	13 10	13 7	—	—	9 5	9 10
Grass Seed :							
Perennial, per cwt.	16 9	24 2	15 7	17 1	15 7	20 2	9 3
Italian, per cwt.	22 7	50 4	31 9	28 0	18 9	22 11	8 2
Mixed, per cwt.	15 11	29 7	22 4	20 3	15 5	14 10	6 11

* Not yet available.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR RETAIL PRICES AND INDICES.

The Ministry of Labour general index of retail prices of food in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, at December 1st, was 57 per cent. above the level of July, 1914, as compared with 54 per cent. at November 1st, and 39 per cent. at December 1st, 1938. Between 1st November and 1st December there were further increases in the retail prices of bacon and of eggs. Prices of fish and of cheese also moved upwards. The average price of margarine had fallen in October as a result of the introduction of a standard blend at 6d. per lb.; but with the re-introduction of the principal blends previously sold, the average price rose, in November, to about the same level as at 30th September. The other articles of food included in the statistics showed relatively little change in price.

The following table shows the average retail prices of certain foods in large towns and villages, on December 1st, 1939, November 1st, 1939, and December 1st, 1938.

Article	Dec. 1, 1939	Nov. 1, 1939	Dec. 1, 1938	Increase over July, 1914.		
				Dec. 1, 1939	Nov. 1, 1939	Dec. 1, 1938
	per lb. s. d.	per lb. s. d.	per lb. s. d.	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.
Beef, British— ...						
Ribs ...	1 3	1 3	1 2½	51	50	43
Thin Flank ...	0 8½	0 8½	0 7½	25	23	15
Beef, Chilled or Frozen—						
Ribs ...	0 10½	0 10½	0 9½	43	42	32
Thin Flank ...	0 5½	0 5½	0 5	15	12	2
Mutton, British— ...						
Legs ...	1 4½	1 4	1 3½	56	55	45
Breast ...	0 8½	0 8	0 7½	26	24	14
Mutton, Frozen—						
Legs ...	0 11	0 11	0 10½	61	60	50
Breast ...	0 4½	0 4½	0 4	12	10	—
Bacon (Streaky) ...	1 7½	1 6½	1 3	72	65	33
Butter—						
Fresh ...	1 6½	1 6½	1 4½	29	29	13
Salt ...	1 6½	1 6½	1 3	32	31	6
Cheese ...	0 11½	0 11	0 10½	36	26	24
Milk ...	Per Qt. each	Per Qt. each	Per Qt. each	99	98	99
Eggs (Fresh) ...	0 2½ Per 4 lb.	0 2½ Per 4 lb.	0 2½ Per 4 lb.	128	110	94
Bread ...	0 8½ Per 7 lb.	0 8½ Per 7 lb.	0 8½ Per 7 lb.	46	46	47
Flour ...	1 1½	1 1½	1 2	30	30	32
Potatoes ...	0 6½	0 6½	0 5½	37	38	16

The cost of maintaining unchanged the pre-Great War standard of living of working-class families at December 1st, was approximately 73 per cent. over the level of July, 1914, as compared with 69 per cent. at November 1st, and 56 per cent. at December 1st, 1938.

AGRICULTURAL PRICES.

THE FEEDING STUFFS (MAXIMUM PRICES) ORDER, 1940.

NEW ORDER FIXING PRICE SCALE.

Under the Feeding Stuffs (Maximum Prices) Order, 1939 (S.R.O. 1324), the maximum prices of feeding stuffs were fixed at approximately the level prevailing immediately before the war. Since that date the cost of purchasing feeding stuffs from overseas has risen on account of increased freights, insurance and exchange rates. Practically all feeding stuffs are now being bought on Government account, and are being sold to merchants at prices consonant with those in the Order with a consequent loss to the Government.

It has, therefore, been decided that the prices of feeding stuffs must be raised, and new maximum prices to operate from Monday, the 8th January, are, accordingly, prescribed in the Feeding Stuffs (Maximum Prices) Order, 1940, made by the Ministry of Food.

As in the previous Order, these prices have in all cases to be increased by the cost of transport including, in the case of processed articles, the cost of transporting the raw material to the manufacturer's premises. The prices are subject to other additions for sale in small lots, etc.

In the case of processed feeding stuffs, the prices have been revised to allow for the increased cost of sacks as well as to cover the increased cost of the raw material, but this should not involve any appreciable increase in the net cost of the feeding stuffs, since there has been a corresponding rise in the value of second-hand sacks.

The new Order, in addition to prescribing the new scale of prices, repeals the old Order, but repeats the majority of its provisions in revised form and includes certain new provisions, one of the most important of which gives to the buyer the right of requiring the seller to furnish details of freight and other permissive additions to the appropriate price. Among other things the margins allowed to merchants are reduced in some cases, and the permitted additions for sale in small lots, etc., have been revised and in general reduced. The definition of compound cakes, meals and mixtures, has been revised to exclude simple mixtures, and separate maximum charges are permitted for the two classes.

The following are the schedules to the new Order :—

THE FIRST SCHEDULE.

PART A.

Wheat By-Products

£ s. d.

Fine wheat-feed and straight-run bran other than straight-run bran from white wheat, wheat, home milled	7	5	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Straight-run bran from white wheat, home milled	8	5	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Pollards, Bran and Middlings, imported, white, Australian	8	5	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Pollards, Bran and Middlings, imported from other countries	7	2	6 per ton gross, sacks included.

Maize Products

Maize, cooked flaked (for feeding purposes) ...	10	10	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Maize, kibbled or cut (for feeding purposes) ...	9	12	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Maize meal, home milled (for feeding purposes) ...	9	12	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Maize meal, mixed or white, imported (for feeding purposes)	9	2	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Maize meal, yellow, imported (for feeding purposes)	9	7	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Maize germ meal, home milled	9	5	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Maize germ meal, imported	9	0	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Maize Gluten Feed, home produced and imported, 22% Alb.	9	2	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Maize Gluten Feed, home produced and imported; other qualities at customary differences			
Maize Gluten meal, home produced and imported, 40% Alb.	10	2	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Maize Gluten meal, home produced and imported; other qualities at customary differences.			
Hominy Chop, imported	9	2	6 per ton gross, sacks included.

Barley Products

Barley meal, Grade II, manufactured from imported Barley	9	15	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
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Oat Products

Oats, crushed or rolled or cattle ground from No. 1 Canadian feed Oats	12	12	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Oats, crushed or rolled or cattle ground from other grades and varieties of imported oats at customary differences.			
Oats, Sussex ground, from No. 1 Canadian Feed Oats	13	2	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Oats, Sussex ground from other grades and varieties of imported oats at customary differences			

Products from Pulse and Other Cereals

Beans, split or ground from imported Horse Beans	11	15	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Beans, split or ground from F.A.Q. feeding Rangoon Beans	10	15	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Beans split or ground from Rangoon pickings	10	2	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Beans, split or ground from other grades and varieties of imported feeding beans at customary differences			
Peas, split or ground from feeding Russian Peas	11	15	0 per ton gross, sacks included.

PART A (continued).

Produce from Pulse and Other Cereals—contd.				£	s.	d.	
Peas, split or ground from other imported feeding Peas at customary differences	...	...	...				
Gram, split or ground	...	...	...	12	5	0	per ton gross, sacks included.
Lentils, split or ground	...	...	...	11	7	6	per ton gross, sacks included.
Locust beans, kibbled	...	...	...	9	7	6	per ton gross, sacks included.
Locust bean meal	...	...	...	9	17	6	per ton gross, sacks included.
Rice Bran							
Rice bran, white, imported	...	...	...	6	12	6	per ton gross, sacks included.
Rice bran, par-boiled	...	...	...	6	12	6	per ton gross, sacks included.
Rice bran, home-produced	...	...	...	7	2	6	per ton gross, sacks included.
Dried Grains, etc.							
Dried Grains, Ale, machine dried	...	...	...	6	17	6	per ton.
Dried Grains, mixed, machine dried	...	...	...	6	12	6	per ton.
Dried Grains, Distillers, 40% Oil and Alb.	...	...	...	8	2	6	per ton.
Dried Grains, other qualities at customary differences.	...	...	...				
Malt Culms	...	...	...	6	10	0	per ton.
Sundry Products							
Fish meal, 60% Alb., 6% Oil (max.), home produced	...	...	...	22	0	0	per ton gross, sacks included.
Fish meal, home-produced, other qualities at customary differences.	...	...	...				
Fish meal, imported, herring, 60/64% Alb.	...	...	...	20	0	0	per ton gross, sacks included.
Fish meal, imported, herring, 65/70% Alb.	...	...	...	21	0	0	per ton gross, sacks included.
Fish meal, imported, 45/50% Alb., 8/9% Oil	...	...	...	18	0	0	per ton gross, sacks included.
Fish meal, imported, 65% Alb., 8% Oil	...	...	...	22	0	0	per ton gross, sacks included.
Fish meal, imported; other qualities at customary differences	...	...	...				
Whale Meat and Bone meal, imported, 52% Alb.	...	...	...	14	10	0	per ton gross, sacks included.
Whale Meat and Bone meal, imported; other qualities at customary differences	...	...	...				
Whale Meat meal, imported, extracted, 62% Alb.	...	...	...	17	0	0	per ton gross, sacks included.
Whale Meat meal, imported; other qualities at customary differences.	...	...	...				

PART B.

Cotton Seed Cake and Meal

	£	s.	d.
Cotton seed cake, undecorticated, home-produced, Egyptian	6	12	6 per ton.
Cotton seed cake, undecorticated, imported, Egyptian	6	10	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Cotton seed cake, undecorticated, imported, Indian, 30/32% Oil and Alb.	6	15	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Cotton seed cake, decorticated, 48/50% Oil and Alb., imported	9	7	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Cotton seed cake, decorticated, 44/47% Oil and Alb., imported	9	0	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Cotton seed cake, decorticated, 40/42% Oil and Alb., imported	8	10	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Cotton seed cake, decorticated, 38/40% Oil and Alb., imported	8	5	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Cotton seed meal, decorticated, 49% Oil and Alb., home-produced	9	10	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Cotton seed meal, decorticated, 42% Oil and Alb., home-produced	9	0	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Cotton seed meal, decorticated, 50/53% Oil and Alb., imported	9	15	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Cotton seed meal, decorticated, 45% Oil and Alb., imported	9	5	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Cotton seed meal, decorticated, 40/42% Oil and Alb., imported	9	0	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Cotton seed meal, extracted, 28/30% Oil and Alb., home-produced	7	7	6 per ton gross, sacks included.

Groundnut Cake and Meal

Groundnut cake, decorticated, 54/56% Oil and Alb., home-produced	8	17	6 per ton.
Groundnut meal, extracted, 52/53% Oil and Alb., home-produced	8	17	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Groundnut cake, undecorticated, 39% Oil and Alb., imported	7	12	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Groundnut cake, undecorticated, 37/39% Oil and Alb., home-produced	7	12	6 per ton.
Groundnut cake, decorticated, 54% Oil and Alb., imported	9	0	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Groundnut cake meal, decorticated, 54% Oil and Alb., imported	9	5	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Groundnut cake, expeller, 57/60% Oil and Alb., imported	9	2	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Groundnut cake meal, 57/60% Oil and Alb., imported	9	7	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Groundnut cake, 48/50% Oil and Alb., imported	8	15	0 per ton gross, sacks included.

Linseed Cake

Linseed cake 8% Oil, home-produced	10	12	6 per ton.
Linseed cake 9% Oil, home-produced	10	17	6 per ton.
Linseed cake, home-produced; above 9% Oil at customary differences			
Linseed cake, expeller, 9% Oil, Indian	10	12	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Linseed cake, expeller, 10% Oil, Indian	10	15	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Linseed cake, slab, Indian selected brands	11	5	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Linseed cake, slab or expeller, Indian other qualities	10	12	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Linseed cake, slab, imported other than Indian, 7% Oil	10	12	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Linseed cake, slab, imported other than Indian; above 7% Oil at customary differences.			

PART B (continued).

Other Oilseeds, Cakes and Meals

	£	s.	d.
Coconut cake, home-produced	8	12	6 per ton.
Coconut cake, imported	8	7	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Copra meal, extracted, home-produced ...	8	17	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Hempseed cake, imported, 35/37% Oil and Alb.	7	5	0 per ton.
Hempseed cake, imported; other qualities at customary differences.			
Hempseed meal, extracted, imported, 35/37% Oil and Alb.	7	5	0 per ton.
Hempseed meal, extracted, imported, other qualities at customary differences.			
Palm kernel cake, home produced	7	15	0 per ton.
Palm kernel meal, extracted, home produced ...	8	0	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Rape meal, extracted, home produced	8	0	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Rape meal, imported	7	15	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Sesame cake, home produced	8	15	0 per ton.
Sesame cake, hydraulic, imported	9	0	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Sesame cake, imported; other qualities at customary differences			
Sesame meal, extracted, home produced	8	15	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Soya bean cake, home produced	11	12	6 per ton.
Soya bean cake, imported	11	12	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Soya bean meal, extracted, home produced ...	11	12	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Sunflowerseed cake, home produced and imported, 47/48% Oil and Alb.	8	7	6 per ton.
Sunflowerseed cake, home produced and imported, 32/34% Oil and Alb.	7	5	0 per ton.
Sunflowerseed cake, home produced and imported; other qualities at customary differences.			
Sunflowerseed meal, extracted, home produced and imported, 42/44% Oil and Alb.	8	7	6 per ton.
Sunflowerseed meal, extracted, home produced and imported, 32/34% Oil and Alb.	7	10	0 per ton.
Sunflowerseed meal, extracted, home produced and imported; other qualities at customary differences.			

PART D.

	£	s.	d.
Maize, whole corn, cinquantina	9	5	0 per ton.
Maize, whole corn, other varieties for feeding purposes	8	0	0 per ton.
Barley, imported feeding	8	0	0 per ton.
Oats, imported feeding, No. 1 Canadian Feed ...	11	0	0 per ton.
Oats, imported feeding; other grades and varieties at customary differences.			
Beans, home grown, other than cluster or tic Beans	10	0	0 per ton.
Beans, imported feeding, horse	10	0	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Beans, imported feeding, Rangoon F.A.Q.	9	0	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Beans, Rangoon Pickings	8	7	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Beans, imported feeding; other varieties at customary differences.			
Peas, imported, Maple	20	2	6 per ton gross, sacks included.
Peas, imported feeding, Russian	10	0	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Peas, imported feeding; other varieties at customary differences.			
Gram, imported feeding	10	10	0 per ton gross, sacks included.
Lentils, imported feeding	9	12	6 per ton.
Locust Beans, whole	7	15	0 per ton.

PART E.

				£	s.	d.
Imported feeding wheat	...	...	...	7	4	1 per ton.

PART F.

Hay				£	s.	d.
Prime Meadow, English, Scottish, Welsh or Northern Ireland	...	...	...	6	0	0 per ton trussed, ex Farm.
Prime Mixture, English, Scottish, Welsh or Northern Ireland	...	...	...	6	10	0 per ton trussed, ex Farm.
Canadian F.A.Q.	...	...	...	5	15	0 per ton in bales, ex Quay.
Canadian Timothy and Clover	...	...	...	6	2	6 per ton in bales, ex Quay.
Norwegian	...	...	...	5	12	6 per ton in bales, ex Quay.

THE SECOND SCHEDULE.

PART A.

Weight				Charge	
				s.	d.
15 cwts. and under 20 cwts.	...	...	...	5	0 per ton.
5 cwts. and under 15 cwts.	...	...	...	10	0 per ton.
Under 5 cwts.	...	...	...	The customary addition.	

PART B.

Weight				Charge	
				s.	d.
40 cwts. and under 80 cwts.	...	...	...	3	4 per ton.
20 cwts. and under 40 cwts.	...	...	...	4	6 per ton.
10 cwts. and under 20 cwts.	...	...	...	9	0 per ton.
5 cwts. and under 10 cwts.	...	...	...	13	6 per ton.
Under 5 cwts.	...	...	...	The customary addition.	

PART C.

Weight				Charge	
				s.	d.
10 cwts. and under 20 cwts.	...	...	...	5	0 per ton.
5 cwts. and under 10 cwts.	...	...	...	10	0 per ton.
1 cwt. and under 5 cwts.	...	...	...	20	0 per ton.
Under 1 cwt.	...	...	...	The customary addition.	

THE THIRD SCHEDULE.

PART A.

Any feeding-stuff contained in Schedule 1 of the Order and any of the following feeding-stuffs.

Meat and Bone Meal or Meat Meal or Whale Meat Meal.
 Molasses.
 Home grown Wheat, crushed or ground.
 Home grown Barley, crushed or ground.
 Home grown Oats, crushed or ground.
 Home grown Beans, crushed or ground.
 Home grown Peas, crushed or ground.
 Any other home grown cereal, crushed or ground.
 Any other home grown pulse, crushed or ground.

PART B.

Dried Blood.
 Meat Meal.
 Meat and Bone Meal.
 Liver Meal.
 Whale Meat Meal.
 Ground Nut Cake Meal.
 Soya Bean Cake Meal.
 Wheat Germ.
 Cod Liver Oil.
 Any other Vitamin potent oil.
 Dried Milk (whole, separated, or buttermilk).
 Dried Whey.
 Dried Grass Meal.
 Dried Clover Meal.
 Dried Yeast.
 Kelp.

THE FOURTH SCHEDULE.

(as applicable to N. I.).

First Column.	Second Column.
Belfast, the City Hall 	10 miles.

FERTILISER PRICES.

The following are the prices for phosphatic and compound fertilisers for January, 1940. They are based on the basic prices obtaining in the four months ending 30th June, 1939, together with the additions allowed by Direction 2 of the Control of Fertilisers (No. 1) Order, 1939, issued under the Emergency Powers (Defence). These prices are for six ton lots ex-Belfast or Londonderry, and do not include freight charges which, of course will vary from district to district. The prices of these manures are subject to a discount of 5 per cent. for cash with order.

	Per ton gross	
Superphosphate, 16% S.P.A.	£4 13 6	
Potassic super, 11% S.P.A., 2% K ₂ O. ...	£4 18 6	
Mangel manure, 8% S.P.A., 5% nitrogen, 3.5% K ₂ O.	£6 14 3	
Root manure, 11% S.P.A., 3.75% nitrogen, 2.75% soluble K ₂ O.	£6 13 9	} Ministry of Agriculture Formulae, 1940.
Oat and Barley manure, 9% S.P.A., 6% nitrogen, 4% K ₂ O.	£7 5 3	
Potato manure, 11% S.P.A., 3.5% nitrogen, 6% K ₂ O.	£7 3 9	

The price for sulphate of ammonia in six ton lots ex-Belfast or Londonderry is £8 13s. 6d. per ton. Extra charges for small lots:—Two tons and over, but less than six tons, 5/- per ton; one ton and over, but less than two tons, 10/- per ton; two cwts. and over, but less than one ton, 1/- per cwt.

TRADE AND PRICES OF LIVE STOCK AT
BELFAST AUCTION MARTS.

At the auction sales of fat cattle held at Belfast Marts during December the demand was brisk, and a general seasonal advance in prices was recorded.

In the first week of last month prices reflected the variability of the quality of the offerings, and ranged between wide limits, but on balance they were maintained at about previous levels. The second week of the month saw a marked improvement in trading conditions and in prices which continued to be fairly well maintained at the sales held before Christmas, although the quality and condition of many of the animals were less satisfactory than usual. At the following holiday sales, held on the last Wednesday of the month, there was a high proportion of super grade cattle, and with a keen enquiry ruling prices recorded further appreciable advances. The general ranges of

quotations throughout the month were: top quality, 42/- to 50/-; good commercial cattle, 40/- to 45/-, and rougher and under-finished animals 34/6d. to 43/- per cwt. live weight.

The following table shows the weekly average prices per live cwt. of fat cattle last month, compared with those obtaining at the corresponding dates in 1938:—

Week ended			per cwt.		Week ended			per cwt.	
			s.	d.				s.	d.
9th December, 1939	...		40	0	10th December, 1938	...		32	11
16th	"	"	42	9	17th	"	"	34	6
23rd	"	"	42	4	24th	"	"	34	0
30th	"	"	43	9	31st	"	"	35	6
Average for month	...		41	10	Average for month	...		34	0
6th January, 1940	...		45	10	7th January, 1939	...		35	8

Fat cows remained in firm request at prices ranging from 27/- up to a top of 40/- per live cwt. for well-finished young animals.

In the store cattle section last month trade was quiet throughout, farmers and other buyers being dilatory in bidding for the animals, many of which were of poor quality. For good animals prices showed little alteration on the month, but those for inferior types were a little cheaper. Large forward stores fetched from £13 10s. 0d. to £16 10s. 0d.; six-quarter-olds from £11 10s. 0d. to £14; cattle of from 12 to 15 months £9 to £12, and calves and weanlings from £6 to £10 10s. 0d. per head.

Dairy cattle remained in very keen request until after the middle of the month when an easier tendency became noticeable, resulting in prices declining from the previous high levels. The general run of prices at the December sales was: top grade cows £26 up to an extreme top of £40 5s. 0d.; fresh useful animals £20 to £29, and aged and blemished beasts £15 to £24 per head.

Trade in fat sheep and lambs was somewhat variable during December, but on the whole the demand was brisk and, with quality fairly good, prices tended firmer. The estimated prices per lb. dressed carcase weight, ranged from 8½d. up to 11¼d. for lambs, and from 5¼d. to 7¼d. for ewes according to breed and quality.

The weekly ranges of prices for fat cows, store cattle, dairy cattle, and fat sheep and lambs are shown in the table on page 585.

PRICES OF OTHER STOCK AT THE BELFAST AUCTION MARTS.

Description	Week ended- 9-12-39	Week ended 16-12-39	Week ended 23-12-39	Week ended 30-12-39
Fat Cows ...	Range of 1st quality " 2nd "	£18 to £28 £13 to £18	£18 to £27 £13 to £18	£15 to £22-15 £11 to £16
Store Cattle : Large Forward Stores ...	Range of 1st quality " 2nd "	£14 to £16-10 £12 to £14	£14 to £16-10 £12 to £14	£13 to £15-15 £11-10 to £13
Younger Stores ...	Range of 1st quality " 2nd "	£10-10 to £12 £7 to £9-10	£10-10 to £11-15 £8 to £10	£9-10 to £11 £6-10 to £9
Dairy Cattle : Milch Cows ...	Range of 1st quality " 2nd "	£26 to £34 £21 to £25	£26 to £40-5 £21 to £25	£25 to £34 £20 to £24
Springers ...	Range of 1st quality " 2nd "	£25 to £32 £20 to £24	£23 to £27-10 £20 to £22	£23 to £31 £20 to £22-10
Sheep and Lambs : Crossbred and White Ewes	Range of 1st quality " 2nd "	34/- to 45/- 27/- to 37/-	38/- to 49/- 32/- to 39/-	36/- to 50/- 28/- to 41/-
Blackface Ewes ...	" 1st " 2nd	25/- to 36/6 18/- to 27/6	28/- to 38/- 20/- to 28/6	27/- to 37/6 23/- to 29/-
Crossbred & White Lambs	" 1st " 2nd	36/- to 50/- 28/- to 39/-	40/- to 51/- 32/- to 44/-	38/- to 70/- 28/- to 44/-
Blackface Lambs	" 1st " 2nd	18/- to 27/- 13/- to 19/-	20/- to 25/6 15/- to 20/-	18/- to 27/- 12/- to 19/-
Rams	" 1st " 2nd	40/- to 51/- 30/- to 40/-	40/- to 51/- 34/- to 54/-	44/- to 56/- 35/- to 44/-

TRADE AND PRICES OF LIVE STOCK AT FAIRS.

As a general rule the demand for store cattle at fairs held in Northern Ireland during December was quiet to moderate, and the general undertone of the market was easier at the close of the month. Most of the cattle were of average quality and condition and, whilst the best types of strong polly bullocks for short keep and well-coloured heifers for breeding remained in steady request at previous prices, other sorts met an indifferent enquiry, and lower prices were usually accepted for these. On the whole, however, fairly good clearances were effected.

The quality of the fat cattle shown at certification centres last month was, generally speaking, moderate to good, and a firm enquiry was maintained throughout the month, although at some centres business was mainly confined to local requirements. Well finished young cattle of medium weights, varying from 8 to 9 cwt., and good types of heifer animals provided the chief attraction but, as a general rule, buyers paid appreciably higher prices than were obtainable during November. Dairy cattle continued in keen request up to the middle of December, when the demand weakened and prices eased in consequence. Good young cows suitable for shipment, and springing heifers with a promise of useful milking qualities, were the best sellers at ruling high prices. Good clearances were usually effected in the earlier part of the month, but towards the close it became increasingly difficult to dispose of second and third quality stock.

The sheep trade at fairs was confined to fat lambs, ewes and hoggets, and the demand continued to vary considerably from centre to centre, but prices all over were firm to dearer on the month.

A feature of the trade at these fair centres was the slump in the demand for young pigs during December and, except in a few cases, prices closed considerably lower on the month. The dull enquiry was also reflected in sales of breeding sows, which were only effected at easier rates of from £6 to £11 per head, according to type and quality.

PRICES OF LIVE STOCK.

Average prices of Live Stock at Fairs during the month of December, 1939.

Date	Fair	Calves (under 9 months)	Store Cattle Per cwt. Live weight	Fat Cattle (18 months and over) Per cwt. Live weight	Springers		Milch Cows	Fat Lambs (under 12 months)	Fat Sheep (over 2 years old)	Young Pigs
					Cows	Heifers				
		Per head £ s.			Per head £ s.	Per head £ s.	Per head £ s.	Per head £ s.	Per head £ s.	Per head £ s.
1	Moy	—	37/- to 40/-	39/6	21 5	17 17/6	20 2/6	—	—	—
5	Omagh	7 0	40/- to 42/-	42/-	17 0	17 0	16 0	—	—	—
6	Londonderry	—	35/- to 41/-	40/-	22 0	—	—	—	—	1 10
6	Rathfriland	6 15/9	36/- to 41/6	42/-	18 10	18 0	19 10	—	—	1 8
7	Ballymoney	7 17/6	35/- to 39/6	—	24 10	21 10	20 0	—	—	1 12/6
7	Strabane	5 15	37/6 to 39/-	39/-	16 10	—	16 0	—	—	2 0
8	Ballygawley	—	28/- to 41/-	41/6	17 0	—	16 0	—	—	2 0
8	Irvinestown	6 14/3	35/- to 38/6	36/-	16 0	15 0	16 0	—	—	1 17/6
11	Enniskillen	6 7/9	34/- to 39/-	37/-	20 0	17 0	17 0	—	—	1 12/6
13	Crossgar	—	37/- to 40/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1 12
13	Kilrea	6 16/9	34/- to 41/-	41/-	23 0	20 0	—	—	—	1 5
16	Portadown	6 6/9	36/- to 39/-	42/-	25 0	22 0	24 0	—	—	1 17/6
18	Camlough	6 0	38/- to 43/-	41/-	18 10	17 10	16 10	—	—	—
20	Lisnaska	6 13/3	30/- to 36/-	38/-	20 0	18 0	17 10	—	—	1 16
21	Ballynahinch	—	37/- to 40/-	—	24 0	—	21 10	—	—	1 12
21	Money more	6 5/9	37/6 to 41/-	41/6	19 5	—	20 0	—	—	—
22	Fintona	7 10	42/- to 46/-	39/-	16 0	17 0	17 0	—	—	1 10
28	Antrim	—	37/- to 40/-	40/-	—	—	—	—	—	0 12/6
29	Castlederg	5 10	37/6 to 38/6	41/-	16 0	—	—	—	—	1 6
29	Killylea	—	32/6 to 43/6	42/6	19 0	—	—	—	—	—
30	Ballymena	6 16/6	32/- to 43/-	—	25 0	22 10	24 0	—	—	1 10

* Long Wools. † Downs and Crossbreds. ‡ Mountain.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE.

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